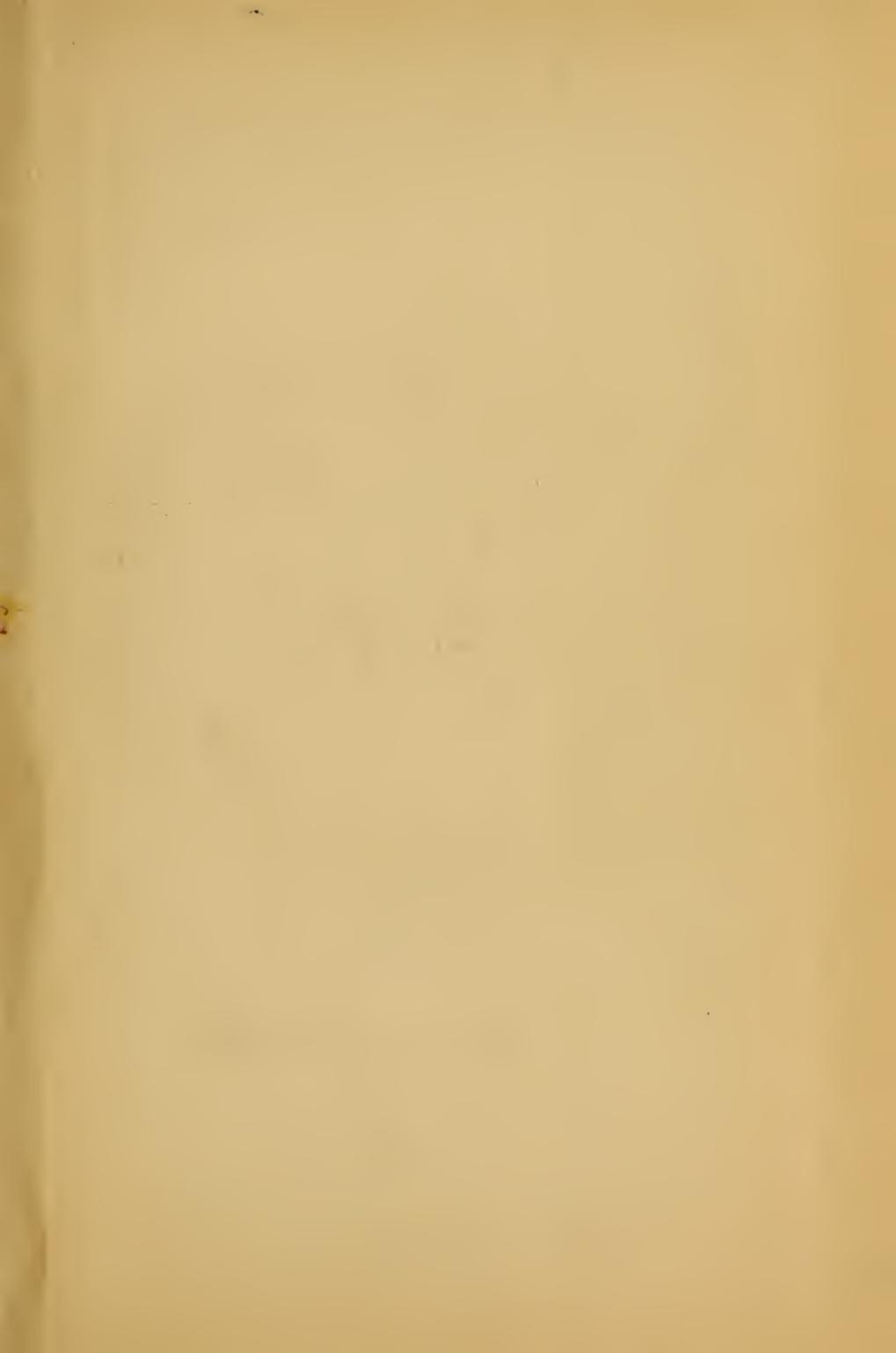


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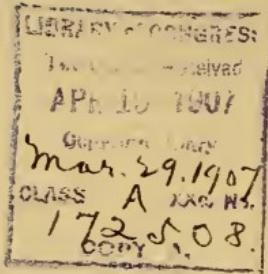
# MAKING A NEWSPAPER

BY

JOHN L. GIVEN  
LATE OF THE NEW YORK "EVENING SUN"



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TO  
MY WIFE



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# MAKING A NEWSPAPER

## CHAPTER I

### THE AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

THE average American, while he does not perhaps often realize it, regards the newspapers of his country much as he regards the Liberty Bell and Bunker Hill. In the Liberty Bell and Bunker Hill he sees symbols of independence and democratic government. In the newspapers he sees concrete examples of that priceless possession, free speech. Holding the newspapers thus apart from the ordinary, he is willing to overlook the fact that they are in reality pure business ventures conducted for the purpose of making money, and consider them as representing not men but principles. The American is proud of his newspapers, and while there is here and there an example which he may not defend, he is ever ready to praise them and, if need be, fight for them as a whole. There is nothing which will make the eagle shriek louder than the shadow of a muzzle for the press.

Newspapers are read everywhere in America, for the editor, like the missionary and the school-teacher, is ever on the lookout for new territory; but the most persistent readers are found in the larger cities. Here a newspaper is a daily necessity. Even the newly arrived, long down-trodden immigrant cannot wait until

he learns to read English, but must have a daily journal printed in his native tongue. Apparently the thirst for information is in the air. In the crowds that ride to the offices, stores, and factories in the morning there is scarce a man or a woman who does not carry a paper, and in the home-going crowds those who are not reading, or carrying papers as evidence that they intend to read, are so few that unless sought for they are overlooked. Were one to make inquiry, too, he would learn that many of these insistent readers continue their search for news all day long. New editions aggregating hundreds of thousands of copies are issued in the largest cities at intervals of an hour or so from early morning until late at night, and the newsboys never cease making sales. On Sunday the newspaper reading goes on with unusual energy. Knowing that their patrons will have plenty of time on their hands, the publishers enlarge their papers for this day to four or five times their ordinary size, and having done this, print about twice the usual number of copies. There are plenty of persons in America who do little else on Sundays than pore over newspapers.

Like most things American, the American newspaper is continually changing. Fifteen years ago it was not exactly what it was ten years before, and at the present time there are newspapers conducted along lines that were undreamt of fifteen years ago. If an old-time editor had attempted to enlarge the circulation of his paper by using bill-poster type for headings, printing colored pictures, and giving away tin whistles, chewing gum, false faces, and kites, he would have been looked upon as crazy, and the probabilities are that he would have been restrained by his relatives and friends. To-day there are editors who are doing these

very things, and in twelve months some of them are disposing of as many papers as some of the famous old editors one hears about sold in half as many years.

As a result of some of the new methods introduced into newspaper work, the term newspaper has of late years taken on a new meaning. The old-style newspaper was a publication which was intended to appeal to grown men only, and men of staid habits, at that. It printed the news, but it made no pretense of providing light or easy reading. It ignored one-half the adult population entirely—the women—in bidding for readers, and took no account whatever of the children; apparently the editors proceeded on the theory that the women could let the papers alone if they did not like them, and that the children were beneath notice. The new-style paper is conducted on a different plan. Instead of taking a high and mighty attitude it strives to please by offering something to everybody. The solid news is given as in the old-style papers, but the stories are written so that they are entertaining; there is a continued story; a whole page of sporting news is presented; the chess-lover gets a column; the man who likes town talk is considered; the fisherman is told where the fish are biting; pictures are provided for those who like them; in short, all tastes are remembered. And a particular effort is made to please the women. Every bit of current news in which it is thought they will be interested is exploited at length, and this is supplemented by the talk of women's clubs, fashion notes, recipes, and dress patterns. To the children an appeal little less insistent is made. For them there are funny pictures, jokes, puzzles, descriptions of games, and frequently—this with the Sunday edition—coupons entitling them to dolls, boxes of paints,

## Making a Newspaper

and other articles that might be expected to appeal to juvenile hearts. The new-style newspaper, when it does what its editors strive to make it do, delivers a universal appeal and once gaining access to a home becomes a household necessity. To a certain extent it becomes the daily instructor and entertainer for the whole family.

Of course, most newspapers, coming in between the two extremes, are examples of neither the old nor the new school, and the great range of possibilities accounts in part for the difference of opinion that is shown to exist when the question "What is a newspaper?" is asked. There are definitions almost without number forthcoming. With few exceptions, however, they can be divided into three classes. According to one definition, and this is given by persons who always read the editorial columns carefully, a newspaper is a molder of public opinion. Those who are of this mind speak of the "Power of the Press," and the "Fourth Estate," and among them are most of the individuals who write lengthy letters to the editors and in print are known as "Fairplay," "Justice," or "Pro Bono Publico." When one of these persons discloses himself he is usually found to be well past middle age. A second definition comes from those persons who devote themselves almost exclusively to the news columns. These, and they form a large majority of the newspaper readers, make the assertion that a newspaper is a recorder of current events. This definition is as safe as it is simple, for no one can deny that a newspaper is a recorder of events, even while insisting that it is other things as well. The third definition is given by persons, forming a comparatively small class, who make themselves heard frequently,

although not often in print. These assert positively and aggressively that a good many newspapers are scandal-mongering busy-bodies, and the most vehement of them declare that were they so minded they could produce convincing evidence in proof of their assertions. Not infrequently, one speaking of newspapers in this strain leads others to suspect that some particular occurrence has led to the forming of the opinion expressed. Therefore, to avoid the possibility of creating a wrong impression, a person should not rail against newspapers unless he is in a place where he is especially well known, or else not known at all.

There are in almost every large city journals which answer to each of the definitions given, and every person would do well to remember this, and not become too insistent when advancing his views. Anyone familiar with New York newspapers can name one of them which is acknowledged to be a molder of public opinion, but does not enjoy a reputation for the completeness of its news except among its regular readers; another which influences very few with its editorials, but is prized by its patrons because it presents its news in an attractive manner and rarely misses anything of consequence; and still a third which cannot raise much objection when it is called a scandal-monger. As it is in New York so it is elsewhere. But in just which class a particular newspaper is placed depends to a considerable extent upon the person making the classification. A newspaper which one person considers a model is to another a dull, uninteresting publication, while what the second person may regard as embodying the best qualities of modern journalism may by the first be regarded as embodying the very worst. There is no unanimity of opinion when the division is only

a question of good or bad. Every type of newspaper has its admirers, and were a dozen men to be selected in any large city to classify their local journals, the chances are that they would never come to an agreement, each having in his mind different standards of excellence.

Newspaper workers, the men who make the newspapers, counting the cost, the aim, and the labor involved, say that without making fine distinctions there are three kinds of journalism in America. There is first the kind which merely records—the common, or garden variety. This brand recites what occurs in plain sight, but on dull days, when fires and accidents are few and the local politicians are quiet, it fills its columns with material which can be procured in profusion through the expenditure of no greater effort than the wielding of a pair of shears. Against this kind of journalism not much can be said. But there is nothing to say for it.

There is another kind of journalism which records the everyday occurrences about which everyone wants to know, but, not content with this, acts as a disseminator of general information and deals with causes and effects as well as events. It does what most individuals cannot do because of a lack of time or opportunity—keeps watch on the men who serve the public, guards the public purse, and restrains those who would infringe on the public rights—tells of public improvements that are under way and suggests others, and heralds, in words that everyone can understand, great inventions and wonderful discoveries. Where it can it tells what is going to occur. It tells what the scientists, the educators, the law-makers, the artists, and the writers are doing, and contrasts the past with

the present. Continually it makes known that which is useful and instructive, as well as that which is only entertaining. In brief, it presents a picture of the world's progress.

The third kind of journalism, which is of comparatively recent origin, might be regarded as not completed but only in process of formation. This is the so-called yellow journalism, which got its name in 1897 when the leading exponent of the school was exploiting with much ostentation a series of colored pictures in which the foremost character wore a yellow dress. One of the long-established papers coined the term "yellow journalism," using the word yellow in its slang interpretation, which is, cowardly, mean, contemptible.

The first kind of journalism, that which records only, flourishes best in small towns, and is not often found in large cities. Most of the papers which represent this type are nothing more than bread-winners, pure and simple. By their owners and their editors they are looked upon as mediums through which a living is to be gained, and as good livings are rarely gained through them, they are seldom regarded with affection. Hardly ever do the workers employed on them do their very best; the news columns they regard as nothing more than necessary evils, which must be maintained because without them there would be no advertisers, and more important, no livings. This kind of journalism needs no more attention here.

The second kind—that which endeavors to present a picture of the world's progress—is an ideal rather than a reality. There are a few papers which come close to it, some very close; but a great many which aim to attain it fall far short. Some reach the ideal

in their news columns, but through bias or self-interest, print editorials which keep them from the goal. Others fall short because they fail to tell of the commonplace occurrences. Still others, the majority, fail now in one thing, now in another. Details are their undoing, and their owners and their editors, perhaps more than any others, spy out the weak places and the mistakes. There are probably no editors who see their papers as ideals. But this second kind of journalism might be called the standard.

Within recent years whenever daily journalism is discussed, the third kind—yellow journalism—gets the lion's share of attention. In fact, a talk on journalism almost always becomes a talk on yellow journalism. The other kinds get a few words, but they are lumped together and considered as a negative. Magazine writers handle yellow journalism in every conceivable manner, college professors and ministers talk about it, and everyone who has fault to find with the public print holds it responsible. It is an extremely popular topic of conversation; even the ragged newsboys wonder, starting their day's work, what brand of sensation it will permit them to cry.

Yellow journalism originated through a desire to gain readers and advertisers, and it produced results. Its original disciples have readers by the hundred thousand and they have about all the advertising that they can well handle. More than this, they are not afraid of losing either readers or advertisers. The advertisers they know they can hold as long as they have readers, and the readers they hold in a tight embrace. The yellow journals stole their early patrons from no other publications. Instead, they offered something attractive to persons not in the habit of reading, and thus

created a demand where none had existed. And even now the bulk of the yellow journals go either into the hands of those persons upon whom matter-of-fact stories and subdued headlines make no impression, or those who, while depending upon other papers for information which can be accepted as true, elect to look at pictures, read sensations, and acquire mild doses of philosophy in the form of out-of-the-ordinary editorials, as a kind of relaxation. To please persons in either class is by no means an easy task; they demand thrills every day and they will not tolerate dullness or pedantry. Because of this the yellow journals have room for none other than particularly active journalists. Their foremost editors are always stars in their calling, and the under editors and the reporters are almost universally men of education who possess more than average skill. Most of these are attracted to the yellow journals by higher pay than they can get elsewhere, and it is a well-known fact that since the advent of this style of journalism newspaper salaries have been raised in most of the leading cities. With money the yellow journals are prodigal in all departments. They pay good salaries, good enough to capture almost every worker they want, and they rarely think of expense when it is a question of getting news.

That the men who make the yellow journals approve of all they do is not to be asserted. The reporters who manufacture the "signed statements," and get up scares about the "Black Hand," treat these things as huge jokes, and a good many of them look upon yellow journalism in the same light. The artists and heading builders, too, often regard it in the same way, and frequently extend themselves just to see how foolish

they can be. The editors do not like everything about yellow journalism—the red, yellow, and green inks, the double reading headlines, the exaggeration, and the bombast—but they do not consider it a subject for raillery; at least they do not so acknowledge. Their contention is that they go to extremes to attract readers, but that in doing this they gain wide followings, and are thus enabled to right wrongs, protect the weak, and strive with effect for the public good. That the yellow journals really do some of these things cannot be denied. Since they have come into existence it has ceased to be an ordinary occurrence for the officers of banks gone to ruin through neglect, to say to the despoiled depositors: “We are sorry for you, but we can do nothing,” and for ambitious scoundrels proof against mere criticism to infringe on the public rights, confident that they are safe because no one who is competent will take the trouble to interfere. For selfish ends or not, the yellow journals have put a damper on these performances and a lot more like them.

And it is worth remarking that the yellow journals are not so obtrusive as they were a few years ago. The worst have toned down, and some papers, undoubtedly once among the leaders, are now yellow only on exceedingly rare occasions; first-class newspapers, they offend no oftener by over-doing than do their most captious contemporaries by suppressing. Toned down, yellow journalism is more fallacious than vicious, and its most prominent earmarks are impudence and impertinence. And even at its worst yellow journalism was not as bad as it was pictured. To listen to some of its enemies one would have thought that it instigated murder, riot, theft, and arson without end, and that it was responsible for

most of the crimes of every sort committed. In reality, most of the criticism consisted of generalities that meant little or nothing. Adhering to facts, instances where yellow journalism has done worse than exaggerate and offend by exposing things that might better have been hid from view are hard to find.

In a rather roundabout way there has crept into the newspaper field in America, in the last few years, the same tendency that has made itself so manifest in manufacturing—the tendency toward domination by a comparatively small number. There are no newspaper trusts and there are not now any more consolidations and mergings of different publications taking place than ever before, but all the same the principle of the survival of the fittest is making trouble for many publishers. Odd as it may appear the new move is being brought about by the growing efficiency of the steam and electric railroads of the country, and the extension of the rural mail delivery system. With the adding of every new train and the improvement of every new time-table, the building of every new trolley road, and the establishment of every new mail route, the big city papers are enabled to reach out further, and, wherever they reach, the local papers suffer, their readers forsaking them for the better and usually cheaper importations. There is not a paper published in any city between New York and Boston that has not in the last ten years been hurt by the papers of these two cities, and in some of the small towns the local papers have had inroads made on their business that have come nigh wrecking them. All through Pennsylvania the same conditions exist, the small town papers being affected by the appearance in their territory of the Philadelphia

and Pittsburg publications. Nor are the small cities and towns the only places where the call for newspapers is in part supplied from outside. The great city of Brooklyn does not boast of a single morning paper, the New York papers supplying the entire demand, and so thoroughly do the Pittsburg papers dominate their section of the country that Allegheny, a city having a population of over 125,000, cannot support an English daily, either morning or evening. Jersey City and Newark both have excellent local papers, publications that are enterprising and efficient, but with the New York morning papers landing in these cities long before dawn and the evening papers coming in at every hour of the day, the papers of both places have to be content with less than they deserve, although they wage constant warfare with the papers of the smaller New Jersey cities that are nearby.

The country weeklies, too, find themselves every year subject to greater competition. Many that were published close to large cities have been forced to the wall, and many others have been compelled to lower their subscription price until, once great money-makers, they now do little more than earn bare livings for their owners. Fifteen years ago \$2.00 a year was not considered an exorbitant price for a country weekly. Now \$1 a year is all that most country papers—there are over 12,000 of them in the United States—dare ask. The saving grace of the country weekly published near a large city is the job office.

There are in the United States at the present time over 2300 daily publications, and in the aggregate they issue every day above 15,000,000 papers, enough to supply one copy to every five inhabitants. In some cities the aggregate circulation compared with the

population would indicate that there were four copies printed to every six persons, but this is an exaggeration explainable when one thinks of the conditions in a place like Pittsburg, where the newspapers have almost as many readers outside of the actual city as they have in it. Evening dailies outnumber morning dailies about two to one, and in the smaller cities the evening papers are increasing the more rapidly largely because the evening papers are less susceptible to outside competition. It must be here pointed out that while there are over 2300 dailies published in the United States, some of these are printed in foreign languages or are neighborhood or class publications, such as financial reviews and stock-yard reports, which do not make a universal appeal for patronage. This is particularly true in Manhattan and Bronx boroughs, which are ordinarily considered as making up the city of New York. In these boroughs there are 47 daily publications, but of this number there are only 15 printed in English which aim to present the news of the world and are circulated broadcast. Outside of New York the difference is not so great, but in every large city the special publications exist. How many English daily newspapers, using the word in its generally accepted sense, there are in the country it is impossible to determine, for there is no line of demarcation, some of the class publications presenting fairly complete accounts of certain kinds of general news, but whatever the number, there are about 175 printed in cities having over 100,000 inhabitants, and when a young man at the present time talks about "going in for journalism," his ultimate aim is, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, one of these papers. The big city daily is now the thing.

Among old-time newspaper workers it is often said that the foundation of distinctive American journalism was laid in 1835, when James Gordon Bennett started to publish the *New York Herald*. Previous to that time the editors of the country thought more of molding public opinion than they did of presenting the news, and their highest ambition apparently was to become involved in editorial controversies. When an editor felt called upon to tell how the country should be run, or to lambaste another editor, the news was allowed to go, and even when his mind was at peace he kept his dignity. The *Herald* from the start was run on a different principle. It aimed first to give the news, and the editor did not wait for the news to be brought to him; he went out and got it, and when it became necessary he went pretty far. That he had the right ideas as to what the people wanted was quickly shown. Starting with a capital of less than five hundred dollars he had his paper firmly established within a few years, and in the early forties he was well on the highway of success. The innovations introduced by the *Herald* caused the editors of the long-established papers to scoff, but by degrees they had to make concessions and in self-defense join in the work of presenting Facts; and once the new ideas were installed competition in the modern sense was quick to follow.

The War of the Rebellion had much to do with converting the American people into a nation of newspaper readers. The controversy over the Slavery question and the stirring events leading up to hostilities stimulated interest and made many readers, but after the fighting began the demand for information became universal. Contributing its quota of soldiers, every hamlet thereafter had a direct interest in what was

going on at the front. And the demand for news gave American journalism fresh impetus, for no paper, however small, could fail to hear the cry for information of camps and battles, the killed and the wounded. The large city papers, enabled through the increased circulation, and the growing receipts from advertising, to make expenditures that a few years before would have been impossible, responded by sending reporters to the front, and making use of the electric telegraph, heretofore employed sparingly; the papers printed in small towns contented themselves with clipping the great news from the large city publications, but this they supplemented with letters written by soldiers well known to all their readers. By the close of the war there were few persons indifferent to the news, and no papers which did not realize that news was considered before comment.

But journalism would never have attained the position it occupies either in America or elsewhere, had it not been for improvements in the art of printing. Even after the first quarter of the last century had passed the newspaper printing press was nothing more than a machine built on the lines of the familiar letter copying press. The type form was inked with a hand roller, and after the sheet of paper had been adjusted the impression was made by forcing down the press's top. Only one impression was made at a time, and each sheet had to go through the press twice to be printed on both sides. In those days a paper could not have gained a circulation of much over 1000, even had the demand existed, for this was close to the limit of the press's capacity. The ordinary cylinder press such as is seen now in small country newspaper offices, although in an improved form, came into use about

1830. In this press the type forms, two pages at a time, are laid on a flat bed and moved backward and forward under a heavy revolving drum, the paper being fed by hand from a table built at one end. With mechanical power this press has a capacity of about 1500 an hour. In 1846 came the forerunner of the modern press, a method then being discovered of attaching the type form to the drum instead of to the press bed. Following this came the process of stereotyping which permitted the reproduction of the types in a curved plate which could be attached to a revolving cylinder, to which a half-dozen men could feed sheets of paper. Then, in 1871, came the web press, with stereotyped plates fastened to several cylinders and the paper feeding in from a spool, or web. In the modern web-perfecting press, which is really a number of presses built together, the blank paper passes into the machine from several spools, and the papers come out printed on both sides, pasted, folded, and cut all ready for distribution. There are to-day in use presses which the builders say can print 192,000 eight-page papers in an hour.

The typesetting machine, long the dream of inventors, did not come until late in the century, and even then it did not come in the form expected, for the pioneer machine, still the leader, instead of setting types such as are used by hand workers, casts through the use of brass matrices solid lines of reading matter. As late as 1880 the government census report dealing with printing, after speaking of the many improvements made, said: "The ingenuity of man has not yet invented a substitute for the setting of type by hand, the method of composition remaining precisely the same as it was when printing was first invented." In

1886, Ottmar Mergenthaler, of Baltimore, announced that he had accomplished the feat, but four years later the hand compositors were still contending that the new-fangled contrivances would soon be relegated to the scrap heap, while the majority of publishers were holding off to see what would happen. In 1894 only 200 of the machines were in use. In 1906, in the United States alone their number was over 10,000, while about half as many more were found in England. Each machine can do as much work as five average-hand compositors. Since Mergenthaler announced his invention other machines have been placed on the market, and in the United States there is now scarcely a daily paper published in a town of over 25,000 inhabitants which depends upon hand composition.

The new-style presses, the stereotype plates, and the mechanical compositors neither alone nor together, however, would have made possible the newspaper as it exists had not the manufacturers of paper made wonderful progress. As late as 1862 the paper ordinarily used by newspapers cost twenty-four cents a pound. It was made from cotton rags, and the increasing demand for rags having pretty well equaled the supply the outlook was for higher prices. Relief came when it was discovered that serviceable paper could be made from wood pulp, and since this, reading is within the reach of all. To-day the newspapers get their blank paper in rolls weighing about a half a ton at a cost of a fraction over two cents a pound, and spend the money that would have gone for paper in getting news.

As a result of all the changes in the art of printing, newspapers are to-day about as cheap as anything on earth. One cent is the prevailing price only because no smaller coin is issued. They would probably

in some instances be given away were it not that publishers are well aware that people do not attach much value to things which anyone can get for nothing. The old joke about the "circulation liar" now misses the mark so far as the large cities are concerned. A one-cent paper, in the largest cities, which has a circulation of only 50,000, which was about the limit anywhere forty years ago, is ashamed of it and refuses to show its books, and 100,000 circulations cause no wide comment. In New York at the present time there are papers which, every day, each print in the neighborhood of a half million copies. It is worth mentioning here that in 1830 daily papers often sold for six cents a copy and that it was not until 1833 that a penny paper was established in New York.

Daily newspapers, when their time of issue marks the distinction, are divided into two classes, morning and evening. A paper of the class first mentioned is true to its name in that it is printed and issued in the morning, but a large part of the work on it is performed during the hours of darkness which most persons think of as constituting night. Reporters and editors, however, never forget that as time is measured, night ends at midnight. If in the course of an evening a reporter employed on a morning paper is writing about an event of the afternoon he writes "yesterday afternoon," knowing that his paper will not be printed until the next day is several hours old. But when after midnight he is required to write concerning something that happened a minute or so after the clock marked the beginning of another day, he is careful to employ the words, "this morning," with a thought to the impression it will create on the persons who will read the article a few hours later. It is to be sup-

posed that the man, who, rising from the breakfast table at 8 o'clock, picks up his paper and reads in it about something which occurred that same morning, will be more than ever convinced that his favorite journal is an enterprising publication. A reporter for an evening paper is equally quick to score by using "this morning" instead of "last night," and he will stretch a point to get in the word "to-day." "Yesterday" he steers clear of when he can.

The first evening papers were not printed until late in the afternoon, but publications of this kind have advanced their time of issue until now some of them appear on the street as early as 7 o'clock in the morning. In New York the most aggressive evening papers issue about ten regular editions, the last one somewhere near 7 o'clock in the evening; extra editions are issued later whenever the editors deem them necessary. Morning newspapers issue anywhere from two to five editions. The first, which usually starts to come from the presses soon after 1 o'clock in the morning, is for out-of-town circulation exclusively. The last, commonly issued at 3.30 o'clock, is for local readers. Intermediate editions are sent to nearby suburban towns or to particular sections.

The only part of the Sunday paper which is printed on the day of issue is that which contains the news. The colored supplements are printed two or three weeks in advance, and the sections devoted to special stories are usually run off the presses over a week before they get into the public's hands. Very often, all the supplements are delivered to the newsdealers on Thursday and Friday, so that on Sunday morning the circulation manager need only attend to the distribution of the section that contains the news.

Where this is done the retail dealers assemble the various sections, commonly putting the one which contains the news or one containing colored pictures on the outside. The dealers, unless they exercise care in the assembling, produce sad mix-ups, and it is because of this danger that the Sunday papers warn purchasers to make sure that they get all the pages to which they are entitled.

When two papers, one a morning and the other an evening publication, are issued from the same establishment, they have, so far as most of the workers on them can see, very little in common. Each paper has its own editorial rooms, they have different editors except for the editor-in-chief, and there are, except in rare instances where they employ jointly a few men to watch certain places such as minor courts, two distinct forces of reporters. Often the editors of one paper do not know those of the other even by sight, and frequently there is not much love lost between the two corps of reporters, partly because the standard of pay is not the same for the two papers. Each managing editor acts independently when engaging correspondents to furnish the news of places in the United States and Canada, although usually the two papers support one set of foreign correspondents between them. Each paper has its distinct force of workmen in the mechanical departments, and sometimes there are two sets of presses. Always, however, there is only one business manager and one business office.

Repeatedly owners have tried to merge the entire reportorial staffs of their morning and evening papers, but so far none of the attempts have proved successful. When the last one was made in New York the news-gatherers who were ordered to write two accounts of

every story they reported protested vigorously and backed up their protests by making their second stories brief and uninteresting; many of them contended that even doing their best they could not put much life into their second stories. To the remonstrances of the reporters were soon added those of the editors, who declared that under the new system their work was badly hampered. They said that while sometimes they found themselves with two accounts of one happening, they often as a result of misunderstandings, late in the day, found themselves without stories that were badly needed, and that, more than this, many of the articles which came to them for use were poorly written and fit only for the wastebasket. The attempt to combine the two staffs of reporters in this instance was abandoned after a few weeks' trial.

## CHAPTER II

### NEWSPAPER OFFICE ORGANIZATION

THE working forces of a modern newspaper are organized much as are the forces of an army. There is one man who corresponds to a commander-in-chief; others who might be likened to generals of divisions; under these a great number of minor officers, and, last, a host of privates. Each individual has certain duties to perform, but each one's province is slightly overlapped from both above and below, with the result that no person is indispensable.

First, always, comes the owner of the paper, the proprietor. Customarily he contents himself with engaging the business manager and three or four of the foremost editors, but he can step in whenever he chooses, and he never allows those subject to his wishes to forget that while he may at times be open to conviction, he is not to be denied after he has made up his mind. When the paper comes in for commendation the owner usually manages to get a place well in the foreground, where he can be seen without difficulty; but he is entitled to all the honors he gets, for if the paper makes a mistake the public forgets all about his subordinates and vents its ire on him, as if he were alone responsible. And the fact that the public usually knows upon whom to direct its attacks when a newspaper makes an unpopular move, proves clearly that those persons who declare that modern newspapers are

published by greedy corporations and have no individuality, are wrong. The ownership of many of the larger papers is divided, but where a paper is eminently successful it almost always has associated with it the name of some one man. What those persons who sadly announce that newspapers have lost their individuality mean, is that the owners now occupy the prominence once given to editors; and it might be added that an owner-editor, the general public having come to realize that a great newspaper is not a one-man product, now gets the title owner, whereas an owner-editor was once regarded as an editor only.

Daily journalism has, however, lost its individuality to the extent that there are at the present time almost no owners of any prominence who look upon their papers as mediums through which to air their likes and dislikes, as was the custom a half century ago. They no longer attack private citizens simply because they have grievances against them, and they do not get their own private affairs mixed up with their business as publishers or editors. The changes that have come about cannot be better illustrated than by referring to two editorials that were printed in New York in January, 1844; one in the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*, of which James Watson Webb was editor, the other in the *Tribune*, edited by the great Horace Greeley. Angered by an article appearing in the *Tribune* in the course of a controversy concerning the question of lower postage rates, Mr. Webb paid his respects to Mr. Greeley in part as follows:

"The Editor of the *Tribune* is an abolitionist; we, precisely the reverse. He is a *Philosopher*; we are a *Christian*. He is a pupil of Graham, and would have all the world live upon bran bread and sawdust; we

are in favor of living as our fathers did, and of enjoying in moderation the good things which God has bestowed upon us. . . . He seeks for *notoriety* by pretending to great eccentricity of character and habits, and by the strangeness of his theories and practices; we, on the contrary, are content with following in the beaten path and accomplishing the good we can in the old-fashioned way. He lays claim to *greatness* by wandering through the streets with a hat double the size of his head, a coat after the fashion of Jacob's of old, with one leg of his pantaloons inside and the other outside of his boot, and with boots all spattered with mud, or possibly a shoe on one foot and a boot on the other, and glorying in an unwashed and unshaven person. We, on the contrary, eschew all such *affectations* as weak and silly; we think there is a difference between *notoriety* and distinction; we recognize the social obligation to act and dress according to our station in life; and we look upon cleanliness of person as inseparable from purity of thought and benevolence of heart. In short, there is not the slightest resemblance between the Editor of the *Tribune* and ourselves politically, personally, or *socially*: and it is only when his affectation and impudence are unbearable that we condescend to notice him or his press."

To this arraignment Mr. Greeley, in the next issue of his paper, replied with a column editorial in the course of which he said:

"As to our personal appearance, it does seem time that we should say something, to stay the flood of nonsense with which the town must by this time be nau-seated. Some donkey a while ago, apparently anxious to assail or annoy the editor of this paper, and not well knowing with what, originated the story of his care-

lessness of personal appearance; and since then every blockhead of the same disposition and distressed by a similar lack of ideas has repeated and exaggerated the foolery; until from its origin in the Albany *Microscope* it has sunk down at last to the columns of the *Courier and Enquirer*, growing more absurd at every landing. Yet all this time the object of this silly railillery has doubtless worn better clothes than two-thirds of those who thus assailed him—better than any of them could honestly wear, if they paid their debts otherwise than by bankruptcy; while, if they are indeed more cleanly than he, they must bathe very thoroughly not less than twice a day. The editor of the *Tribune* is the son of a poor and humble farmer; came to New York as a minor without a friend within two hundred miles, less than ten dollars in his pocket, and precious little besides; he has never had a dollar from a relative, and has for years labored under a load of debt (thrown on him by others' misconduct and the revulsion of 1837), which he can now just see to the end of. Thenceforth he may be able to make a better show if deemed essential by his friends: for himself, he has not much time or thought to bestow on the matter. That he ever *affected* eccentricity is most untrue: and certainly no costume he ever appeared in would create such a sensation in Broadway as that James Watson Webb would have worn but for the clemency of Gov. Seward. Heaven grant our assailant may never hang with such weight on another Whig Executive. We drop him."

The reference to the garb that Mr. Webb might have worn calls for the explanation that after having been sentenced to prison for fighting a duel, he was saved by a pardon.

Although no large newspaper would at the present time publish editorials anything like those quoted, newspaper workers know that the owners of the great dailies, or the men who hold the controlling interests in them, are never mere figureheads as is frequently assumed by outsiders. The measure in which a paper actually reflects the ideas of its owner depends, though, upon the man's inclinations, habits, capabilities, and individuality. If he delights in active newspaper work, keeps in close touch with his paper,—and in these days he can do this even though he be thousands of miles away from the editorial rooms,—is an able manager, and has a strong character, it will voice his sentiments in every issue. If he elects to give his time to other interests, shirks responsibility, or lacks force, it will represent him only in a general way; its methods will be those of which he approves, but the men he hires will determine how the methods shall be applied.

There are in every large newspaper office three main departments and three classes of workers. One class includes all those persons who have to do with the paper's financial affairs, the business manager and his assistants; another includes the editors and reporters, the men who supply the reading matter; and in the third are the mechanical workers, the compositors, stereotypers, and pressmen. The men who distribute the printed papers really make up a fourth class, but because they are directed by the business manager, or one of his assistants, and have nothing to do with the actual making of the paper, they are by newspaper workers considered as a part of the business office force.

At the head of the business department is the busi-

ness manager, the holder of the purse. Under him are the advertising manager, who sells space in the advertising columns of the paper; the circulation manager, who supervises the distribution of the printed papers to the newsdealers who retail them to the public; and the cashier, who handles the receipts and disbursements. Under each of these men is a large force including, respectively, solicitors; mailroom men, wagon drivers, and porters; and bookkeepers and clerks.

First in the editorial department, next to the owner, comes the editor-in-chief, who looks after the paper's general welfare, paying particular attention to the editorials. The managing editor, who is next in authority, has charge of the news, supervises its collection, and sees that it is properly prepared for publication. Under the managing editor, who usually has an assistant, are the city editor and night city editor, who handle the local news; the telegraph editor, who collects and prepares for publication all the news that comes from outside of the city; the artists and cartoonists, and the various department heads, including the exchange editor, who reads the out-of-town papers that come to the office, in search of material worth reprinting; the music, art, and dramatic critics; the financial, sporting, real estate, and society editors, and the editor of the Sunday supplements. Usually the managing editor engages all the special editors, who are accountable to him. The city editor directs the reporters, while the telegraph editor supervises the work of the correspondents, who are, in reality, reporters stationed outside of the city. Both these editors are assisted by staffs of copy readers, who edit the articles submitted and write the headings for them.

In the mechanical department of a newspaper there

are three heads: the foreman of the composing room, the foreman of the stereotypers, and the superintendent of the pressroom.

To a newspaper worker no definite impression is conveyed when one merely says that a man is an editor. The financial editor, for example, is a writer. He may have two or three newsgatherers to whom he must give some attention, under his care, but his principal task is the preparation of an article dealing with values. The telegraph editor, on the other hand, is busy most of the time with actual editing, correcting, pruning, or embellishing; rarely does he write a complete article. The managing editor and the city editor neither write nor edit. Their work calls only for directing. Thus an editor may be a writer, a reader of manuscripts, or a director.

There are many persons who labor under the impression that the reporters, in whose ranks most of the editors have started, merely carry the information they collect to their offices, and there turn it over to editors to be written. But the impression is a false one. The reporter who investigates an occurrence writes about it unless he transmits his news to the office over a telephone wire, and when the telephone is employed the story is written by another reporter and not by an editor. The stories written by the reporters must be good enough, too, to be printed almost as they reach the editors. It might here be explained that the word "story" is used by newspaper workers in a variety of ways. The newsgatherer who has been sent out to report a fire, meeting an acquaintance who asks him on what he is engaged, says that he is after, or covering, a "fire story." On returning to his office, he says that he has a story about a fire, and the editor

to whom he gives an outline of his information tells him to write a story of a half column or some other length. Through writing the reporter calls his manuscript his story, and later talking with another reporter, may tell him that the story, meaning the fire and the attending incidents, was a hard one to cover. It is apparent that the constant employment of the word makes it possible to dispense with many explanations. When a paper prints a story that all its rivals missed, the editors say that they have scored a "beat" or a "scoop."

While every large newspaper has its forces organized on the same general plan, it is impossible to say that this or that editor always performs such and such work, for almost every office is distinctive in some particular. In most establishments the editor-in-chief is the power that makes the paper what it is; in a few the managing editor is the real leader, and in a very few the city editor stands close enough to the owner to exert influence at least as great as that of either of the others. In contrast, there are city editors who are in reality nothing more than chief copy readers, the managing editors or assistant managing editors going over their heads when there is need for real planning in the assigning of the reporters. Because there is this element of individuality, one describing the organization of a newspaper's forces cannot keep a particular office in view. It is necessary, rather, to take a number of them and, picking out those things which the majority have in common, describe them in general.

## CHAPTER III

### THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ALTHOUGH every newspaper is dominated by its owner, the character of the publication and the measure of success which it attains depend to a great extent upon the editor-in-chief. In the owner's absence he works nine-tenths of the time free-handed and rarely under hard and fast orders, for almost all of the few commands that are transmitted to him are of a general nature and permit of liberal interpretations; and, when the owner is on the scene, he is still powerful, for then he serves as chief adviser and close confidant. Moreover, he has a heavy vote in all vital questions, for the owner never forgets that it is part of the editor-in-chief's duties to solve the hard and vexatious problems and point out the safe way. The explicit orders that he gets the editor-in-chief of course carries out to the letter, and he is slow to introduce radical innovations offhand, for he is well aware that he obtained the office he holds because his known views and methods met with the owner's approval. By the other workers the editor-in-chief is regarded as the owner's personal representative, and they obey him explicitly, partly because they have no means of knowing which of the orders he gives are original with him and which he is merely transmitting for his superior.

Like the head of a large manufacturing concern the editor-in-chief oversees everything, but instead of al-

lowing details to take up his time he outlines a policy and looks to his subordinates for results. Indeed, one of the best tests of his capacity and efficiency is his ability to choose subordinates who can carry out his plans. That he may know how affairs in the office are moving, he every day requires the editors under him to tell him about the work in hand, and he keeps it before them that they are not to take chances when he is within reach. About anything that he does not understand he asks questions and he requires clear replies. To make suggestions he is no slower than the owner. In some offices there is a meeting every day, attended by the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, and the editorial writers, at which matters of interest are brought up for discussion, but when the editor-in-chief has a decided opinion, there is little argument; the other editors may differ with him, but if they do they refrain from insisting, for they do not forget that he is held responsible for the welfare of the paper and that he wants around him only men who can see things as he does.

When preparing articles dealing with the "Peculiar Weather Conditions Existing," or with the "Latest Discoveries in the Interior of Africa"—when writing anything, in short, which may be read with interest, but will occasion no great amount of talk and certainly no criticism—the editorial writers, who are engaged by the editor-in-chief, and are known as editorial writers rather than editors, choose their own subjects and treat them according to their inclinations. But editorials which take a side, or advocate a certain course of action when the public is divided, are usually inspired. The editor-in-chief explains more or less in detail what he desires said, and the editorial writers

dress his thoughts as best they can. Always the editor-in-chief passes on all editorials before they are published, and in some offices he writes an editorial every day himself.

As a rule the editor-in-chief has attained his place after long service in the newspaper business; but very often the other editorial writers have been trained in different schools. Frequently they graduate into daily journalism after giving up college professorships, and among them are found many former ministers and lawyers. Sent out to do reporting, many of the editorial writers would find themselves hard put. To a great extent the editorial writers and the men who handle the news work with opposite aims. The editorial writers sum up and set forth conclusions, while the news editors and reporters confine themselves to setting forth facts. The editorial writers can encroach on the preserves of the other workers whenever they choose, but news editors and reporters must, whatever else they do, avoid sermonizing. Because they are not expected to air their own opinions, news editors and reporters do not often become editorial writers. Now and then, however, one of them, ambitious to get out of the turmoil incident upon the gathering and editing of news, tries his hand at paragraphs, which he submits to the chief editorial writer, and in time develops into a full-fledged editorial writer. At first he writes paragraphs only, and it may be years before he sees his articles displayed in the first column of the editorial page.

To preserve a proper balance between the editorial end of the paper and the news end is one of the editor-in-chief's most difficult tasks. It is very, very easy for him to allow one to dominate the other, and he

need only relax his vigilance a trifle to have his paper begin to approach smugness. The editorials are all well enough in their way, but a newspaper is first and foremost supposed to give the news, and the readers want facts, enough to permit them to form their own opinions. The majority of readers skip the editorial columns entirely, and doing this they will not tolerate the attempt to force editorials upon them through the news columns. Many persons, moreover, who do read the editorials do so in an antagonistic spirit, flaring up the minute they become aware that the writer is trying to relieve them of the necessity of thinking.

Many editorial writers, aware of the antagonism with which the ever-ready adviser is regarded, do not openly attempt to mold opinion. Instead, they reach their end by marshaling their facts in such a manner that the readers will be inclined to form certain conclusions. The persons who fall into traps thus prepared are doubly secured, for they tell themselves, reading an editorial, that the editorial writer or the paper is a sound reasoner, as in view of the facts set forth the only logical conclusion possible has been reached. They overlook the possibility that some facts may have been concealed, and flatter themselves that the writer agrees with them, whereas he has led them to agree with him. These editorial tactics are similar to those employed by the clever after-dinner speaker, who tells a story in such a manner that his hearers, seeing the point before he comes to it, are put in good humor, and congratulating themselves on their own astuteness applaud with double incentive. There are some editorial writers, too, who place great faith in reiteration. Day after day, wishing to attain a certain end, they say the same thing, varying their method of

expression as often as they can. After a time, many persons reading what they have to say and remembering that they have seen the same thing said many times before but forgetting just where, come to think that what is said must be true. Occasionally, also, when employing the tactics of reiteration, the editorial writer sticks to a certain phrase, as does the advertiser who makes every bill-board and blank wall shout: "It Shines."

To be thoroughly competent an editorial writer must possess an enormous fund of information and must have a ready pen which he can move to orders, even those least fancied. The man who could write convincingly only when convinced would soon find himself in ill favor with the editor-in-chief and the owner, both of whom assume that their commands provide full justification at all times. And, assigning topics, neither one of them bothers himself about the manner in which they are received so long as the surface complacency is preserved. To keep abreast of the times the editorial writers have to do a deal of reading outside of the office as well as in it, and the young reporter who thinks because he sees them come into the office late in the day, and because they appear to take things easy, that they have a sinecure, is very much mistaken. They are regular attendants at the great public libraries, where they study as industriously as any schoolboys, and many of them carry with them when they report for duty editorials prepared in their homes the night before. Inside a newspaper office the editorial writers have a rather peculiar standing. They are regarded as having almost nothing in common with the men who concern themselves with the news, and partly no doubt because most of them are no longer young, they are

considered by the reporters and the under-editors as highly reputable and distinguished gentlemen, who are at all times entitled to great respect. In fact, the editorial writers, the editor-in-chief, and the managing editor are by the other workers viewed as the solid pillars of the establishment.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MANAGING EDITOR

THE managing editor is, in the opinion of most of those under him, the mainspring of the office. With the editorials he has nothing to do, except that he is listened to with respect in the counsel room, and he is subject to the will of both the owner and the editor-in-chief, but he is the one upon whom it devolves to superintend the collection of the news and the actual making of the newspaper. The owner and the editor-in-chief may know how to get the news and how to print it. The managing editor must not only know how; he must direct and take part in the work and see that it is well done. If he fails, it avails nothing that the editorials are polished and the aim of the paper ideal. A paper may succeed without printing editorials worth reading and without having any aim other than the making of money, but it cannot possibly thrive unless it gets the news and prints it in a pleasing and attractive form.

In the absence of specific instructions, the managing editor, so far as the news columns are concerned, and these include all except those reserved for the editorials, says what shall and what shall not be printed, and constantly he advises the city editor, night editor, telegraph editor, and heads of special departments to the end that what is printed shall appear in a form

and fashion pleasing to him. By the city editor his likes and dislikes are made known to the copy readers who edit local news and to the reporters, while by the telegraph editor they are conveyed to the men who edit news which comes from outside of the city, and indirectly passed on to the correspondents, who learn by observing the manner in which the stories they send in are corrected or rewritten. The managing editor has a great advantage in that he is in the office at the time the subordinate editors, the copy readers, and the reporters are at work there, and thus gets a chance to pass judgment on articles prepared for publication before they appear in the paper, whereas the owner and the editor-in-chief, customarily, see the news stories only after the paper has been spread broadcast. If a story displeases them they can complain, but they cannot undo; nor can they with certainty guard against continual departures from their views. Having issued general orders, they are compelled, as they cannot foresee any better than other well-informed men just what the news of the future will be, to trust to the judgment of the managing editor.

The managing editor of a morning paper reaches his office early in the afternoon, usually at 2 o'clock. On his desk he finds copies of the evening papers already issued, and having glanced over these he calls for the city editor and the telegraph editor, who tell him of the news in sight and give outlines of the work they have already accomplished. After making any suggestions that occur to him, he pays a visit to the editor-in-chief, with whom he discusses the day's prospects. When he returns to his desk he attacks his mail. Not unlikely, the first communication he takes

up is from "An Old Subscriber," who protests that the paper is wrong on the tariff question. Probably another letter is from "A Reader," who says that he is glad that the paper is right on the tariff question, and hopes that it will throw hotter shot into the numskull opposition. A third may be from a man who says that the paper has made false assertions about him, and that he will bring suit unless there is a retraction. A woman trusts that the paper will, in the future, print less divorce-court news, while to settle a bet a man wishes to learn whether "openers or the whole hand" must be shown after a jackpot has been opened. The editor of a paper published in another city desires information concerning the ability and character of a man once employed by the managing editor, and the editor of another paper wishes to make arrangements for an exchange of news on the occasion of a coming election. One of the correspondents complains that there has been a mistake made in his account, while another correspondent announces that he is tired of having the articles he sends in pruned to almost nothing, and that he is willing to retire from the paper's service. And so it goes. Almost always there are applications for situations and a liberal supply of "poetry."

The commendatory letters are laid aside for publication if they are worth it; those of an opposite character usually go into the wastebasket. Communications which do not give the names of the writers get attention only when they tell where news may be found. The letters which ask questions are turned over to different editors or heads of departments in most offices, but in some they are all intrusted to one man whose fund of general information and familiarity with books of reference make it easy for him to give answers.

The few letters which call for replies from the managing editor are usually answered at once.

While he is disposing of his mail, and it takes him a very short time to do this, for few of the letters require full or careful reading, the managing editor at intervals receives from the city and telegraph editors reports which keep him informed concerning the news that is developing, and, through with his correspondence, he assumes active control. To everything big and little he gives attention. He plans with the city editor for the procuring of all the important news of the city, sends instructions to the correspondents, great and small, and to the reporters who are away from the city on special errands, advises the sporting editor and other heads of departments, like the society editor, helps assign the artists, passes on the drawings submitted by the cartoonists, and under some circumstances tells a few of the reporters how he desires them to go about getting the news which the city editor has asked them to procure, and how he wishes them to write their articles. A good share of his attention the managing editor gives to the telegraph editor, who submits to him many of the queries sent in by the correspondents, and he takes time enough to get the gist of almost all the news that comes from foreign lands. Several times a week, too, he summons the Sunday editor, both to make suggestions to him and to learn from him what he intends to print in the issue of his supplements on which he is working. Occasionally the managing editor deems it necessary to reject some of the articles submitted, but this occasions no delay, for the Sunday editor is not troubled by a scarcity of contributions. Every week he receives three or four times as much material as he can use,

and he always has a well-filled desk to which he can resort in an emergency.

And here it might be mentioned that the Sunday editor, who must not be confused with the literary editor, for the literary editor confines himself to reviewing books and magazine articles and preparing material having to do with authors and publishers, considers everything that comes to him strictly on its merits. He is glad when he can accept the articles submitted by his friends, but he never knowingly allows friendship to interfere with his editorial judgment, for he holds his place only so long as he continues to fill his supplements with material that meets with the approbation of his superiors. As a rule he is best pleased when contributions reach him through the mails, although he is always willing to listen to the person who, having an article in mind, wishes to learn what he thinks of it, for this gives him the chance, if the article as outlined strikes his fancy, to tell just how he would like to have it handled. In most offices a large share of the contributed stories printed in the Sunday supplements are furnished by the reporters, but this is for no reason other than that the reporters, besides being good writers and prolific writers, get to know the kind of material that the Sunday editor desires. The reporters have no guarantee that their work will prove acceptable, and every week dozens of their contributions are "returned with thanks."

Not often does a Sunday editor write an article himself. A story coming to his mind he either makes it known to one of his friends who is numbered among his steady contributors, or asks the managing editor to lend him a good reporter to collect the material and do the writing. Most of the reporters are pleased

to get assignments of this character, and in a few of the largest offices three or four of the best reporters and artists spend about all of their time working for the Sunday editor. An outsider who has a story which he desires to submit has to remember only three things. He should write his name and address on both the first and last pages of the manuscript, after making sure that all are numbered; inclose stamps for the article's return in case it is not accepted; and inclose it in an envelope addressed to the Sunday editor.

There are a few Sunday supplements which are conducted on the plan of a magazine, notably those of the New York *Sun*, which in every issue set an example for nearly all of the cheaper magazines of the country; but the average Sunday paper is a Sunday paper and nothing more, unlike anything else on earth. It might well be called a literary dime museum, for the editor presents not stories that will simply amuse or entertain, but only those which will attract attention because of their absurdity; and the pictures, which sometimes cover whole pages, are, if anything, more unusual than the text.

But to return to the managing editor. Now and then, in the course of the afternoon, he strolls around the office, giving a word of praise where it belongs or stopping to call some delinquent to account; but most of his time he spends poring over newspapers in search of material for new stories. Early in the evening he goes out for his lunch. On his return he plunges into the real hard work, and from then until the presses are set in motion a dozen things demand his attention all the time. The telegraph editor, for example, hurries up to his desk and tells him that a correspondent from whom a long story was ordered has

failed to forward it, and still worse, makes no reply to the telegrams sent him; the night city editor, who takes the place of the city editor after 6 o'clock, next getting his ear, informs him that a reporter detailed on an assignment from which great things were expected has returned empty-handed; next he learns that an office boy has come in carrying the rumor that a rival paper has half its reporters engaged on a big beat; a copy reader who has answered a telephone call tells him that a big fire has broken out in a distant part of the city, and that a reporter who chanced to be in the neighborhood says there will be plenty of work for an artist; the night city editor then asks whether space can be reserved for a column-long account of an accident, word of which has just been received; word then comes from the foreman of the pressroom that a press is out of order, and that if he is to get the first edition printed on time he must have the forms earlier than usual; then comes a telegram from a country correspondent, who, having none of the instincts of a reporter, asks whether the paper would like a story about a bank cashier who has disappeared, taking with him \$100,000 of the bank's money. The correspondent will be discharged for his poor judgment before many days have passed, but for the present he must be borne with, and he gets nothing more than a request to send a full account of the theft and flight as speedily as possible.

The assumption is that the managing editor reads all articles before they are printed, but frequently he delegates the reading to an assistant, who, going over everything, lays aside for him important stories, those poorly written, incomplete, or too wordy, those which read as if they might be libelous, and those which are

not beyond doubt in accordance with the policy of the paper. When he has someone to do the sifting for him the managing editor contents himself with reading only the headings of the bulk of the articles. But the ones selected for his examination he reads with especial care. Both the managing editor and his assistant do their reading when the articles appear in proof form; the proofs come to them by the handful, and the delegated reader, particularly, has to work with great rapidity to avoid falling behind. In the course of a day or a night one of these readers will scan fifty columns of print, correcting, as he goes, bad English and poor constructions, misspelled names, and, as far as he can, errors of fact. Typographical errors he does not mark, as they receive the attention of the proof-readers employed in the mechanical department.

When the managing editor finds a story which he thinks is worth more space than it occupies, he goes to the man who sent it to the printers and asks him to have it amplified. If it is the work of a reporter who is within reach, it is returned to him to be rewritten, and having no more facts, he is, if there is time, directed to get more information, frequently having his attention called to some phase of the incident reported which had escaped him. A story which the managing editor thinks is too long he turns over to a copy reader to be pruned, and across the face of an article which he does not wish to appear in the paper he writes the word "kill." A proof thus marked is sent at once to the room where the typesetting is done, and the foreman there destroys the article. While going over his proofs the managing editor occasionally rewrites a heading or changes a few words to improve an article, but finding it necessary to make many

changes he cautions the copy readers. This doing no good, he engages, as quickly as opportunity permits, better or more careful workers.

While he is reading, the managing editor watches particularly for libelous articles, and any story which arouses his suspicions he investigates, if possible questioning the man who wrote it. Should he not be satisfied after his investigation he marks the article for destruction. Libelous stories which do get into the paper make trouble for everyone who had anything to do with them, reporters, copy readers, and editors; and aware of this, rascals sometimes keep out of the public eye by looking mysterious when reporters call on them to inquire about their wrong-doings, and saying that while they do not feel called upon to explain offhand they will be pleased to do so in court if anything is printed about them. There is no paper which is in a hurry to attack a man, who, while refusing to answer questions, in effect says: "This affair is not all on the surface. If you print anything derogatory to my character, I shall sue for libel." Within recent years newspapers have found that juries are inclined to deal more harshly with them than they once were, and none of them likes to run unnecessary risk. A verdict for \$50,000 damages against a paper exercises a great influence over both it and its competitors, and verdicts for this amount are not unknown.

With the aid of the night editor, the managing editor while he is reading proofs, receiving reports from the other editors, and issuing instructions, keeps track of the material sent to the printers, news as well as advertisements, so that he is able an hour or so before midnight to decide on the size of the paper, that is, of how many pages the issue shall consist. In

small cities the papers come out day after day with the same number of pages, but in a large city the number varies. If either news or advertising is scarce the paper may one day consist of only eight or ten pages, while under different conditions the succeeding issue may include from twelve to sixteen; and to some extent, the size of the paper, strange as it may sound, depends on the weather. If a rain or snow storm is raging a small paper is the result, for then the managers of the big department stores cut down their advertisements, knowing that however tempting their bargains, there are many women who will wait for less disagreeable weather to do their shopping. An extremely hot or an extremely cold day also leads to a curtailment of advertising for the same reason. The size of a newspaper, too, varies with the season of the year. In midsummer, when many persons are out of the city, there is a scarcity of both news and advertising, and there is a decrease in the amount of advertising, except that of dry goods and department stores, immediately after New Year's.

The rush in a morning newspaper office reaches the climax a little before 1 o'clock, when with the last copy sent to the printers the managing editor and the night city editor forsake the editorial rooms for the composing room and devote themselves to arranging the articles in the pages. First the editorial page is got ready. Then those devoted to news are taken up. Always in a morning paper office the first page is "made up" last, thus permitting very late news to get a place where it will not be overlooked. In an evening paper office the financial page is arranged last, as the quotations from the exchanges are received up until the latest possible moment; and because of this this

page often contains important news which arrived too late to get a place on the front page. Routine news and that of little moment a managing editor, of course, has put on the inside pages. The most valuable news almost always gets the last column on the front page, which is the place of honor, partly because the newsdealers, arranging the various papers on their stands, place them in such a manner that the last column of the paper topping each pile is prominently displayed, and partly because it permits a long article to run over on the second page without a break. While arranging the pages the managing editor pays attention to symmetry as well as the worth of the various articles, and when he can he avoids placing headings that read much alike close together.

Most managing editors content themselves with deciding where the important articles shall be placed, but a few choose to direct the entire "make-up" of every page, and occasionally they are assisted in this work by the paper's owner. There is one newspaper owner in New York who almost every night visits his office to assist in this part of the making of his newspaper, and on these occasions the proofs are pasted on sheets which are laid out on the floor, that he may get an idea of how the paper will look when it comes from the presses. If a story told along Park Row is to be believed, he made it a practice to walk back and forth over the sheets while making his inspection, until one night a libelous article escaped both him and the managing editor because he kept his foot on it while they were making their examination, and, appearing in the paper, resulted in a damage suit which cost him several thousand dollars. Since then, it is said, he reads the sheets one at a time on his hands

and knees and sits on a stool to get his bird's-eye view.

An office boy is waiting in the pressroom when the presses begin to move, and the first half dozen papers printed he seizes and hurries to the editorial rooms. There the paper is subjected to a close inspection, the headings and the date lines at the tops of the pages being scrutinized with exceptional care. Over a minor mistake there are sighs, but the discovery of a grievous error may induce the managing editor to stop the presses to have it corrected. When this occurs the man who blundered is in for a reprimand or a fine, and not infrequently for suspension or dismissal.

The managing editor of an afternoon paper is not kept in suspense long before getting a chance to learn what his opponents have done. Afternoon papers are rushed from the presses into the hands of the newsboys without delay, and each office has in its service a newsboy who carries to it three or four copies of all the rival papers as fast as they are issued, while to make sure that no editions are missed the editors send office boys into the street at short intervals to learn what the newsboys there have in stock. But it is not so easy for the editor of a morning paper to learn what his rivals have accomplished. While the first edition of a morning newspaper starts to come from the presses soon after 1 o'clock, it is not until 3.30 o'clock, by which time the last edition has been printed, or is well under way, that the local newsdealers and the newsboys are supplied. The first edition, as has been explained, is intended for out-of-town circulation only, and in every office strong efforts are made to prevent first edition papers from getting into the other newspaper offices on the morning they are printed. Those papers

which are to go by mail are locked in sacks by trusted employees and hurried to the Post Office, and those which are to go by express are securely tied in bundles before they are taken out of the pressroom and piled into the wagons which carry them to the ferries and railroad stations. The drivers of the wagons are told at the time they are hired that they must under no circumstances open these bundles, and if it is found that one has disregarded his instructions he is immediately discharged. The only loose first edition papers supposed to be taken from the pressroom are the few carried to the editorial rooms by the office boy, and these are guarded as if they were bank bills of high denomination. Every editor who receives one is held responsible for its safety, and they observe a hard and fast rule that none of them shall allow his copy to pass out of his possession. Even the reporters are barred from getting papers before they are distributed to the newsdealers, and it is not considered good taste for a reporter to pay any attention to a first edition which he may see lying on an editor's desk.

It is a pleasant fiction that the care taken serves its purpose. The fiction has it that in every office the managing editor and his assistants, their own first edition on the press, sit watching the hands on the clock, wondering what the other papers contain, and waiting until 3.30 o'clock to find out. In reality different conditions prevail. Somehow, somewhere, there are leaks, and half an hour after a managing editor gets a copy of his first edition, he is found devoting his attention to the first editions of all the other local papers, which in some mysterious manner have found their way to his desk. Where they come from

no one seems to know. They simply appear, and the subject of their appearance is one not referred to either by those who know that it is none of their concern—that is, everyone in the office except the managing editor—or by the managing editor who is directly interested.

Possessed of the rival publications the managing editor goes over them to see whether they contain anything important not in his own paper. Some editors, finding that another paper contains a big item of news which they missed, have the story rewritten and without further ado print it in their next edition. But this is a dangerous proceeding. The story may not be true; even if based on truth, the facts may be distorted, and, most to be feared, the story may not only be untrue, but may have been printed in the hope that some other editor would appropriate it. Several years ago a certain paper in a Southern city, becoming convinced that a rival was rewriting and printing the dispatches which it was procuring at great expense, set a trap for the suspect by printing under glaring headlines an account of a mythical shooting affray in which a man of the name of DUARF and one of the name of EKAF were killed. The suspected paper rewrote and printed the story, but its editors doubtless regretted their action when the paper which had set the trap denounced them as pilferers and proved its case by showing that the shooting affray had never occurred, and pointing out that the names DUARF and EKAF were convertible into FRAUD and FAKE.

Lack of time prevents the managing editor of a morning paper from inquiring into stories telegraphed from distant points which he may find in the rival papers, so these are allowed to pass unless they are of

such moment that he feels himself justified in running the risk of involving his paper and himself in difficulties. When the story which it is thought desirable to appropriate is a local one, a reporter is hurried out to find someone who will be in a position to say whether it is true or false, and generally the reporter can get the desired information and telephone it to the office before the presses are started for the last edition. The managing editor of an evening paper, with his numerous editions, defeated in any except the last one, of course, finds it easy to repair the damage before the end of the day.

After he has examined his own first edition and such others as have come to him, the managing editor of a morning paper starts for home, leaving to his assistant, the night editor, or a copy reader the task of making up the second edition and searching it for errors when it comes from the presses. And here may be told a story about one New York editor who congratulated himself that while an elaborate system put copies of the rival publications into his hands almost as soon as their presses started, his own pressroom was so carefully guarded that it was impossible for copies of his paper to go astray. One morning, going home, he got on a street car, unfolded a surreptitiously procured paper, and was beginning to read it when, glancing up, he saw sitting across from him the managing editor of this publication. The discovery disconcerted him, but astonishment made him sit up straight when he found that one of his own first editions was in the hands of his rival. When their eyes met the men bowed, but congratulations were not extended.

The early editions of a morning paper intended for out-of-town distribution exclusively contain much

special matter that never reaches the eyes of the city population. There may be in them three or four columns of "Long Island News," a column filled with matters of interest to residents of Staten Island only, several columns of "Jersey Gossip," and so on. In the last edition all this material makes way for news that came in late, and stories of minor local happenings. Occasionally a managing editor who has come into possession of a big piece of news which he has reason to believe escaped the other papers, purposely holds it for this last edition, and not content with this goes into the pressroom himself when the edition is placed on the presses, has the doors locked and keeps them locked until his watch tells him that another moment's delay will tie up the circulation department and cause disappointment for a lot of the paper's readers. Because of this there is always anxiety in Newspaper Row when it becomes known that any one of the papers has failed to appear at its accustomed time.

For the managing editor of an evening paper there is no gradual working up to top speed. In the office over which he presides haste reigns from morning until night, and instead of one climax there are as many as there are editions issued. When he appears ready for work at 8.30 or 9 o'clock in the morning, the city and telegraph editors and half the heads of departments are waiting for him, and all through the day they call on him at frequent intervals for aid or counsel. When they are not after him he is after them. Procrastination is impossible. Decisions must be made on the instant, for the rule is "Get the news at all hazards." In the office of an evening paper which prints many editions the motto is "Get the news, right if you can,"

and the managing editor of one of these papers, when important news is concerned, will print a story upside down, or with the end where the beginning ought to be, rather than let a rival beat him by two minutes.

Every day the managing editor, whether he be on a morning or an evening publication, somehow finds time to compare his own paper in detail with the rival publications, and finding anything to his paper's discredit, he starts an investigation to determine how this happened. When the perusal of the other papers shows that one of them is printing especially attractive stories, steps are taken to ascertain who is writing them. Should it be learned that the writer is willing to make a change, the information may reach him that he will not be turned away if he applies for employment in a certain office, and if he is not anxious to move he may be told outright by some friend, acting as a go-between, that another paper is willing to give him more pay than he is receiving. The stories sent in by the paper's correspondents are also depended upon to point out possible additions to the office staff, the correspondent who furnishes a series of stories which the other papers miss, always coming in for consideration.

Quick to find poor work on his own paper the managing editor is just as ready, and more pleased, to discover that which calls for commendation. The reporter who procures a good "beat" is sure of a word of praise, and employed on some papers he gets the additional reward of a cash prize. Occasionally the prize reaches \$100, and \$20 premiums are often bestowed. Continuing this scrutiny without cessation the managing editor comes to know the worth of every

one of his men. The work performed by some leads him to mark them for dismissal, that of others tells him not to expect wonders of them, while that of still others tells him where he can look with profit when vacancies in the higher ranks occur.

## CHAPTER V

### UNCOVERING THE NEWS

How a newspaper obtains the news of a large city is a great puzzle to most city residents. Only at long intervals do they themselves see anything which would be worth while telling about in print, and however extended their list of acquaintances, they often go for weeks and months without having an incident that would be of interest to the general public brought to their attention by those directly concerned. Their neighbors' affairs are unknown to them, and their own they endeavor to keep secret. How then, they ask, does a newspaper get to know everything it does; when a murder is committed, when there is any one of a thousand happenings? "How did you learn of this?" is a question that reporters hear every day.

There are some persons, as is evident from the questions they ask reporters, who imagine that the news-gatherers wander around aimlessly waiting for something to turn up; and now and then newspaper workers discover individuals who have heard and believe that the papers employ reporters to patrol the streets, and keep other reporters stationed at busy corners, to watch for incidents worth telling about in print. Indeed, the general opinion seems to be that the newspapers trust largely to luck to keep them informed concerning the city's activity. As a matter of fact, the question of luck rarely occurs to an editor. There are no

reporters who stroll haphazard about the streets and none who has nothing more to do than stand idle at a street corner waiting for something to happen. Seldom does a reporter by mere chance come directly upon important news; and when this does occur the probabilities are that the news will come to the attention of his office in a short time, even if he pays no attention to it.

The uncovering or discovering of news is largely done by persons who have no direct connection with the newspapers. There are a great many who knowingly act as news collectors, but there are more who are unwitting reporters, and among the latter are many of those who wonder most how the papers get their information. Ministers, for example, do not think of themselves as reporters, but the newspapers view them all as valuable allies. Every time he performs a marriage ceremony a minister is by law required to make a report to the Board of Health, giving the name, age, residence, and previous condition, whether unmarried, widowed, or divorced, of each person he marries. His reports are kept from the general public, but some of them in roundabout ways get to the newspapers.

There are few physicians who will willingly aid the newspapers by giving information about their patients, but physicians as a class are highly esteemed as furnishers of news by both editors and reporters. A physician must make a report every time he is called upon to attend a person suffering with a contagious disease; whenever one of his patients dies; when a case of murder, suicide, or attempted suicide demands his attention, and when he assists at a birth. He can be as secretive as he chooses, but he cannot keep his reports away from the newspapers. So far as results

are concerned he might as well carry his information direct to the newspaper offices.

An undertaker gives information to the newspapers as regularly as he is employed to prepare a body for burial. Before he can touch the body he must carry to the Board of Health a physician's certificate giving the cause of death. If the certificate is pronounced satisfactory by the authorities, there is issued to him a burial permit which he must show at the railroad station or ferry-house through which the body goes on its way to the cemetery and again at the cemetery entrance. An undertaker detected in an attempt to smuggle a body out of the city, or to bury one without permission from the proper authorities, would surely pay a heavy penalty. Every report the undertaker makes reaches the newspapers.

The every-day citizen becomes a reporter, among other times, when he tells the police that he has been robbed or assaulted, asks for the arrest of anyone, makes complaint that a noisy neighbor keeps him awake at nights, applies for permission to improve his property, and when he notifies his business associates that he is insolvent. And the every-day citizens who act as reporters have for companions as newsgatherers a host of others who might be described as every-night citizens, among them burglars, sneak thieves, and pick-pockets. These, of whom more will be said, act as collectors of information knowingly and with a purpose, but it is doubtful whether they give a thought to the newspapers while doing it.

Because they have so many newsgatherers who serve them without pay, the newspapers do not find it necessary to keep a direct watch on all parts of the city. Nor do they try to watch the population as individuals;

as long as a man is merged in the crowd the newspapers give him no attention. Instead of watching the city and its people the newspapers devote most of their attention to a comparatively small number of places where it is made known when the life of anyone in the city departs from ordinary paths, or when events worth telling about occur. For example, John Smith, let it be supposed, becomes a broker. For ten years he pursues the even tenor of his way and except for his customers and his friends no one gives him a thought. To the newspapers he is as if he were not. But in the eleventh year he suffers heavy losses and, at last, his resources all gone, summons his lawyer and arranges for the making of an assignment. The lawyer posts off to the County Clerk's office, and a clerk there makes the necessary entries in the office docket. Here-in step the newspapers. While the clerk is writing Smith's business obituary a reporter glances over his shoulder, and a few minutes later the newspapers know Smith's troubles and are as well informed concerning his business status as they would be had they kept a reporter at his door every day for over ten years. Had Smith dropped dead instead of merely making an assignment his name would have reached the newspapers by way of the Coroners' office instead of the County Clerk's office, and in fact, while Smith did not know it, the newspapers were prepared and ready for him no matter what he did. They even had representatives waiting for him at the Morgue. He was safe only when he walked the straight and narrow path and kept quiet.

For the most part the places kept under observation by the newspapers are those where office-holders serve the public. There is no one who is not looked upon as

a possible helper, but the employees of the city, county, state, and nation are the papers' dearest friends. Without these unsalaried reporters the newspapers in the largest cities could not get the local news they do without employing several hundred regular reporters each, whereas the one that does maintain as many as a third of a hundred in the city where it is published is an exception. After setting a guard on most of the public offices and office-holders, the newspapers detail a few men to keep under observation those people who are striving to become office-holders, or endeavoring to get friends into office, and this done set a goodly number to keep an eye on the semi-public centers of activity, such as railroad stations, hotels, steamship piers, and exchanges. It is only for that news which escapes all these watchers that the newspapers trust to luck. The reporters who do the watching are called "department men," and each one of them guards the same place day after day. There are in New York reporters who have not changed their station in fifteen years.

In all large cities the newspapers keep watch on about the same class of places. A list made out by a New York editor would differ little from one made out in the office of a Philadelphia newspaper, and either list might be employed by a Chicago city editor after the making of a half-dozen changes. Some of the places kept under observation in New York are so prolific of news that the watch on them is never interrupted for a minute while they are open for the transaction of business. Others are visited by the reporters at short intervals, one man looking after several of them, while those of a third class are visited every few hours, once a day, once a week, or at greater intervals.

The places in New York which are watched constantly are as follows:

Police Headquarters.

Police Courts.

Coroners' Office.

Supreme Courts, New York County.

New York Stock Exchange.

City Hall, including the Mayor's Office, Aldermanic Chamber, City Clerk's Office, and Office of the President of Manhattan Borough.

County Clerk's office.

To Police Headquarters and the police courts, because of their close relation to the newspapers, separate chapters will be devoted.

At the Coroners' office, which remains open day and night, the newspapers learn of murders, fatal accidents, sudden deaths, suicides and attempted suicides; assaults and accidents which promise to lead to deaths; and cases of malpractice which threaten to result fatally. These things are reported to the coroners by the police, physicians, and undertakers principally, although the coroners may interest themselves of their own volition in any case that they think demands an investigation. The reports which reach the Coroners' office are at once telephoned to the newspapers by reporters especially detailed for this work. These reporters also keep the newspapers informed of the proceedings when inquests are held.

The kind of news found in the Supreme Court which has to do with civil cases only, needs no explanation. There are over a dozen courtrooms in one building, and every day on which court is held finds most of them busy. The reporters determine the importance of the cases that are to come up so far as they

are able by inspecting the daily calendar, but because the brief announcements do not always enlighten them as to the news value of a coming proceeding, they question lawyers they encounter in the courthouse corridors, and visit the different courtrooms at short intervals. Finding a case which is worth writing about a reporter takes notes and later goes to a room which is reserved for the use of the newspaper workers, to write his article. Divorce cases furnish material for a good share of the court writing done, especially on Wednesdays, when one judge devotes his entire attention to undefended suits. Frequently he disposes of over a score of these cases in a day, and listening to the proceedings, the reporters can take notes which will allow them to write to their hearts' content.

Newspaper reporters are not allowed on the floor of the Stock Exchange where the buying and selling take place, but they keep themselves informed concerning the activities there by watching the tickers or tape-printing machines which record the transactions. Each paper has a financial editor, under whose direction two or three reporters work. This editor, who has an office somewhere in the financial district, follows the transactions recorded on the stock indicator very closely, and is thus informed of the range of prices. Each of his reporters collects certain news for him, and with their contributions he is enabled to prepare the article which deals with the daily market. One of his aids looks after the news of the Produce Exchange, the Cotton Exchange, and the minor exchanges, and one of them every day manages to visit a dozen or so brokers' offices, the United States Sub-treasury, and the Clearing House in search of items of interest while going about on special errands assigned

to him by the editor. Failures of banks and brokerage houses are usually investigated by reporters sent from the newspaper offices in response to calls for assistance from the financial editors.

In the City Hall is found a good share of the news having to do with the city government. For the reporting of special meetings men are usually sent from the newspaper offices, which leaves the regular detailed reporters free to keep constant watch on all parts of the City Hall.

From the County Clerk's office comes news of business failures, the filing of judgments, recording of mortgages, and a great lot of matter of a similar nature.

Those places which the newspapers watch carefully, but not continually, are as follows:

City Courts (Minor civil cases).

Court of General Sessions (Criminal cases).

Court of Special Sessions (Minor criminal cases).

District Attorney's Office.

Doors of Grand Jury rooms when the Grand Jury is in session (For indictments and presentments).

Federal Courts.

Post Office.

United States Commissioner's Offices, and Offices of the United States Secret Service officers.

United States Marshal's Office.

United States District Attorney's Office.

Ship News, where incoming and outgoing vessels are reported.

Barge Office, where immigrants land.

Surrogate's Office, where wills are filed and testimony concerning wills in litigation is heard.

Political Headquarters during campaigns.

The following are visited by the reporters several times, or only once a day:

Police Stations.

Municipal Courts.

Board of Health Headquarters.

Fire Department Headquarters.

Park Department Headquarters.

Building Department Headquarters.

Tombs Prison.

County Jail.

United States Sub-treasury.

Office of Collector of the Port.

United States Appraiser's Office.

Public Hospitals.

Leading Hotels.

The Morgue.

County Sheriff's Office.

City Comptroller's Office.

City Treasurer's Office.

Offices of the Tax Collector and Tax Assessors.

At irregular intervals detailed reporters call on other local United States officers, among them the quarantine officials, and at the headquarters of all city and county officers not in the foregoing lists, and every day the men who report real estate sales visit the leading real estate dealers and the auction rooms they patronize. The dramatic critics make daily rounds of the principal theaters and theatrical agencies. Meetings of the Rapid Transit Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Education are always attended, as are those of religious, political, and labor societies, when news is promised. The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court is kept under observation every Friday, the day on which decisions are an-

nounced, and on Sundays the sermons of well-known clergymen are reported. The sporting editor and his assistant keep in touch with the owners of race horses, pugilists and their managers, and others directly interested in sporting events, and reporters are always on hand to get the news connected with the arrival and departure of big ocean liners. From time to time, too, the city editors enlarge their lists of places which are to be kept under close observation. After a heavy snowfall the office of the Street Cleaning Commissioner goes on the preferred lists, as does the office of the Health Commissioner during an epidemic, or after an outbreak of a rare or particularly contagious disease. When a prominent man is dangerously ill, his house is guarded night and day. The lists, too, are temporarily augmented when work in which the public is especially interested is under way, as when a new bridge or street railway is in course of construction, when it behooves the newspapers to keep in contact with both the contractors and the men who work for them.

Believing that all their watchers are alert, the newspapers feel fairly safe so far as news of fires, accidents, murders, arrests, business failures, deaths, court trials, and similar occurrences is concerned. There is, however, no place where they can watch for "Society News," scandal not disclosed in court, and gossip. What is known as "Society News" is collected by reporters, usually women, who depend upon acquaintances for some information, and gather the rest by calling on persons who are "in society" and are proud of it. The persons who figure in "Society News" are generally glad to see their names, their pictures, and accounts of their doings in the newspapers; much more

so than they would openly confess. They remember the reporters when they issue or accept invitations, and, directly or through persons whose actions they control, convey to them intelligence over which, when it appears in print, they often pretend to be angry. The society editors are not troubled by a dearth of material, but can pick from many offerings. The voluminous mail of the society editor is a time-worn newspaper office joke.

For the collection of scandal and gossip each paper dealing in these things has its own system. Servants, for a consideration, make some of the scandals known. Jealousies lead to the disclosures of some, and intelligence of others is conveyed to the newspapers by acquaintances of the persons concerned, who need the money they receive for their information. So it is with gossip. Sometimes a person who comes into possession of a choice morsel goes from one office to another to find out where he can make the best sale, taking care, of course, to give only a faint outline of his story until he gets a satisfactory offer. There are servants who add regularly to their incomes by revealing the secrets of the families which employ them, and there are more men and women than most persons suppose, who, ambitious to shine above their means, are glad to make a few dollars now and then by conveying to the papers that are willing to deal with them any intelligence of which they gain possession.

As it is widely known that the editors are willing to pay good prices for news the newspaper offices are visited by a continual stream of persons who are anxious to exchange information for cash. When there is a collision between ferry-boats in one of the rivers, two or three passengers at least are sure to start for the newspaper offices the moment they set

foot on land, and frequently a passenger who has crossed the ocean on a ship having on board some famous man goes direct from the pier to offer an interview with him and to tell about the incidents of the trip. A street car accident occurring in the business section of the city is pretty sure to lead an enterprising newsboy or bootblack to become a reporter for the time, and often the city editor will hear of the same accident from four or five persons. All the volunteer reporters are well treated by the city editors, and they are well paid for their contributions. For any news that is worth printing the minimum payment is one dollar, and for long stories payment is made at space rates. The man who furnishes a good story and promises not to carry it to other offices is sometimes paid four or five times the regular rates, and occasionally, to encourage him, a city editor will pay an outsider for news which there is every reason to believe will later be sent in by one of the regular watchers. When the editor does this he makes a friend of the volunteer reporter, and at the same time provides a broadside for the dilatory worker. The volunteer reporters are well worth cultivating. They serve as a check on the paid watchers, while often they provide information which would never be uncovered in the regular channels. Moreover, anxious to make sales, the volunteers hurry, and their information is generally "extra fresh." When, a few years ago, there was a bad railroad wreck in a tunnel leading to a station in New York in which a number of persons were killed, one of the papers, informed of the accident over the telephone by a volunteer reporter, was able to get several experienced newsgatherers on the scene five minutes before the representatives of its rivals ap-

peared. When the late comers arrived the police were driving the crowd back, and it was not until order had been partly restored that they were able to get through the throng. The result was that the paper which the volunteer reporter informed of the accident scored a substantial beat.

But valuable as are the volunteer reporters, who might be included in the "luck factor" in news getting, the paid watchers who engage in newspaper work for a living are the men to whom the city editors look day in and day out for their information concerning what is going on in the city. To gain an idea of the service performed by the paid watchers, one need only read a newspaper while keeping the places they guard in mind. A large majority of the local stories printed, when read carefully, show that they have originated or been uncovered in one or another of them.

The detailed reporter who learns that something has occurred which needs to be reported for his paper is not always, however, the man who collects the details and prepares the article reciting them. Often the department man merely informs the city editor that a certain thing has happened, and having done this returns to his task of watching. Most of the important news stories are reported and written by a second group of reporters who are known as "general workers." These reporters, instead of having stations to guard, report for duty in the editorial rooms and remain there occupying themselves as they choose, until they are summoned by the city editor and told to investigate certain occurrences. How the city editor gained the information he already has does not concern them, and it is not customary for him to enlighten them on the subject. The city editor, for example, contents

himself with saying: "Will you look after the fire at Broadway and 80th Street?" and the reporter he addresses posts off without delay.

There was a time not so many years ago when each newspaper maintained a large staff of detailed watchers, but now in all large cities most of the watching is done by a corps of reporters employed by a co-operative concern of which almost all of the papers are members. There are in New York only two papers, one morning and one evening edition, both issued from the same establishment, which, not belonging to the local co-operative association, have their own watchers, and collect all their news unaided. The other papers have their own men stationed at only a few important places. The New York co-operative association maintains about sixty reporters, who are directed by a city editor as are the reporters employed on a newspaper. This city editor aims to collect all the news of the city, and does not take account of the efforts of the newspapers. The articles his reporters write are copied in multiple, after which a copy is sent to each member of the association. The newspaper city editors use these articles as they are received, have them rewritten, or turn them over to reporters, to be embodied in stories written in the offices. When the association's men merely give their city editor the outlines of happenings, he has bulletins written and issued, and when he receives exceptional news he employs the telephone to inform the newspapers.

The uncovering of the news is such an important part of newspaper work in a large city that a detailed explanation of some of the methods employed will not be amiss. Indeed, the explanation is necessary if one is to understand how the editors and reporters do their

work. The methods described will be those used in New York, but as the newspapers in all large American cities pursue about the same plan in getting their news, they may be applied to any large city in the United States.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE POLICE AS NEWSGATHERERS

THE most efficient unsalaried reporters pressed into service by the newspapers are the police. In fact, in the leading cities, deprived of their assistance, the editors would have to get along without a large part of the information they now present, and more than this, they would have to change their methods and adopt a good many of those employed in small towns, where a reporter's worth is measured as much by his ability to cover ground as by anything else. By the public the police are ordinarily thought of as guardians of the city who confine themselves to protecting law-abiding citizens against thieves, preserving the peace, and regulating traffic. By the newspapers, which know more about them, they are regarded first of all as newsgatherers. That the residents of a city are unaware of this is not strange, however, for they possess no knowledge of a score of duties which the police perform every day before their very eyes. How many persons in New York know that the police are required to inspect steam boilers and issue engineers' licenses? Probably not one in five hundred. It is likely that no greater proportion know that the police supervise the operations of pawnbrokers, junk-shop keepers, junk boatmen, cartmen, dealers in second-hand merchandise, and auctioneers. Most persons know that they issue licenses permitting the carrying of firearms,

but the great majority are ignorant of the fact that parades cannot pass through the streets without their permission. In the entire city of New York there are over 8500 policemen. In the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx alone, which are commonly considered as making up the city, there are about 5000, and an effort will in this chapter be made to show the important relation they bear to the newspapers of the city.

At the head of the New York Police Department is a commissioner appointed by the Mayor. His immediate assistants are three deputy commissioners, and close to them is a chief inspector, the ranking officer of the uniformed force. Then come the borough inspectors. Next are the ordinary inspectors, of whom there are six for the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx, each having charge of a certain section. The commissioner and two of his deputies have their offices in the Police Headquarters building, where are also quartered the department clerical force, the inspection and license bureaus, and the chief of detectives and his men. Attached to the office of the chief of detectives is the collection of photographs and measurements making up what is known as the Rogues' Gallery. One deputy commissioner has his office in the Brooklyn Police Headquarters, and it might here be explained that the New York papers in ordinary affairs consider Brooklyn as a separate city; for its news each one of them depends upon two or three department reporters. Ranking below the police inspectors are the captains, one for each precinct. A precinct commonly includes an area about a half mile square, but the size varies with the density of population. In each of these divisions is a station house, where the captain and his

subordinates have their quarters. The front part of the station house's main floor is fitted up as an office, and connected with it is the captain's private room. In the rear are a lounging room and a small prison, and upstairs are dormitories. Next to the captains in rank are the sergeants and below them are the roundsmen; ordinarily there are four sergeants and four roundsmen for each precinct. Last, if doorkeepers, patrol-wagon drivers, and matrons are excluded, are the patrolmen, the privates of the police organization.

The patrolmen of a precinct are divided into platoons, one of which is always out in the streets, and, continually, part of another platoon is asleep or resting in the station house; this second contingent, constituting what is known as the reserve force or the reserves, is called upon in emergencies. The section of a precinct which a patrolman guards is in police parlance his post or his beat, and he is supposed to watch every part of it carefully. To see that the patrolmen keep awake and do not shirk their work is the duty of the roundsmen. The sergeants watch both the roundsmen and the patrolmen and the captain watches them all, spending most of his time in the streets. The inspectors, observing results, are quick to make complaint when laxity appears, for continual disorder in their territory may lead to their undoing. Accused by a superior officer or by anyone else of having neglected his duty or violated the department rules, a policeman is placed on trial before one of the deputy commissioners, and if found guilty, is sentenced to work a certain number of days without pay, or is dismissed from the force. Not as often, though, as they would like, do the officers at the head of the department succeed in ridding it of undesirable members, for most

of the men they dismiss are reinstated by the courts. A commissioner at one time head of the department was not far wide of the mark when he said that it was easier to hang a man than it was to deprive a policeman of his place.

At the time he is made a member of the force, and a man must pass a civil service examination before he can be appointed, a policeman is required to attend a school of instruction where he is taught how he is to perform his duties, and during this period the sergeant who acts as teacher impresses on him with particular emphasis that the one thing he must never forget is to inform his station house without delay whenever an accident, a fire, a robbery, a fight, or any event of a similar character occurs in the territory he guards. For a policeman's good he had better do anything else than be negligent or dilatory in making these reports. If found idling when he is supposed to be wide awake and watchful, he may escape with only a nominal fine; but when it is proved that he has withheld information that should have been made known to his superiors he gets a sentence that he remembers.

With the sergeants it rests to see that the patrolmen and roundsmen make intelligent and complete reports, and no editors dealing with newsgatherers can be harder taskmasters. In the absence of the captain from the station house one of the sergeants is in command, and no matter where the captain is, a sergeant is always found in the main room of the station house sitting behind a desk on which is spread out a big book known as the blotter. This book to the station house bears the relation that the log-book does to a ship. In it the sergeant records arrests, reports made to him, orders either given or received, inquiries of

all kinds, the incoming and outgoing of patrolmen and officers, and complaints of robberies and assaults. In brief, in the blotter the sergeant sets down a running account of the precinct's activities, and time does not hang heavily on his hands, for reports and orders come to him thick and fast. But the precinct history is not merely written and kept locked in the blotter. From all the intelligence that comes to him the sergeant culls the important items, and using the telephone hanging close to his desk, transmits them as fast as they are received to Police Headquarters. The unimportant items he forwards, too, but they travel slower, being embodied in written reports which are carried to headquarters every morning. There are some things which, coming to his notice, a patrolman at once makes known to his sergeant over the telephone. In a good many instances he goes to the station house and makes a report in person, and under some circumstances he telephones a preliminary report and later hands in a second one set down on paper.

Suppose a policeman discovers a fire. If not fore stalled, he immediately runs to the nearest signal box to send in the alarm. An alarm sent out from any thickly populated section in New York brings an engine to the box in not more than five minutes, and in the very heart of the city the first company must appear within three minutes if there is to be no complaint of tardiness made by the police, between whom and the firemen there is great rivalry. As soon as the firemen are on hand and there is no pressing work for him to do the patrolman telephones to the station house, telling whether the reserves are needed. Then he ascertains how the fire started, who owns the building, who occupies it, the probable loss and the amount of insurance,

the names of any injured and the extent of their injuries, and after asking a comrade to keep an eye on his post during his absence hastens to his station house, where he makes his report. This done, he returns to his post. The sergeant, before the entry is made in the blotter, telephones the information received to Police Headquarters, with which place, however, he has already had a conversation relating to the fire, as will be explained.

When the machinery of a fire alarm box is set in motion the notification that there is a fire is transmitted to the Fire Department Headquarters, which is in East Sixty-Seventh Street near Third Avenue. From there it is sent to certain fire companies, Police Headquarters, branch offices of the newspapers near Police Headquarters, the offices of several insurance adjusters, and to a few city officers and employees. Each box has a different number, and every number sounded calls out certain fire companies.

Here it is worth pointing out that, contrary to the general belief, no section of the city is ever left unprotected because a big fire happens to be burning. One reason for this is that there are quartered in many houses what are known as double companies, two complete sets of apparatus and two forces of men. When one company is called out the second simply makes ready to effect a speedy exit, although it does not respond to calls for assistance from the first fire, but waits for what might be called a fire of its own. And expecting a call the firemen get out in almost no time at all. Even under ordinary circumstances in daylight the engine of a crack company will, on the receipt of a signal like 122—the men are so speedy that they occasionally have to wait for the completion

of the signal when high numbers are sounding on the gong—roll over the bridge that spans the curb in from six to eight seconds, and now and then five seconds finds the engine of the prize company out on the street. The second reason why no part of the city is left unguarded when a fire has made necessary the presence of many pieces of apparatus lies in the fact that with the sounding of second alarms and the outbreak of fresh fires begins a shifting about of companies not yet summoned. From all the territory adjacent to that depleted come apparatus and men to occupy empty houses. Every fresh alarm calls for more changes until it sometimes happens that a company finds itself occupying, temporarily, quarters four or five miles from the house to which it is accustomed. Of course, the shifting that comes when thirty or forty pieces of apparatus are engaged in fighting one fire makes each of the idle companies responsible for the safety of an enormous section of the city, but still no place is left without protection.

As soon as a fire alarm sounds at Police Headquarters, the officer in charge of the "telegraph bureau," which got its name before the introduction of the telephone, knowing, from the number sent in, the location of the box, calls on a private telephone wire the station house of the precinct in which it is found and informs the sergeant. Police Headquarters, having told the sergeant of the fire, expects him to furnish particulars in a hurry, and because of this a sergeant is always glad when the patrolman on whose beat the fire was discovered appears with his report, and permits him to supply facts and figures. Continually the sergeants remind their men of the necessity of making prompt reports of fires, and the one who is

not speedy enough to suit his sergeant pays dearly. If a patrolman leaves a fire before it is out, or before getting all the information desired, he returns to the scene and later augments his first report.

Should he be informed of an accident on his post, in which someone has been injured seriously enough to need the attention of a surgeon, a patrolman goes to a telephone and, calling Police Headquarters, gives his name and his precinct, tells where he is, describes the accident briefly, and asks that an ambulance be sent. The hospital nearest to the policeman is informed of the call by headquarters, and under ordinary circumstances the ambulance reaches the injured person within ten or fifteen minutes. In an emergency the policeman sometimes telephones direct to the hospital nearest him, but this is not customary. The injured person having been taken away, the policeman loses no time in making his report to the station house.

If a body is found in one of the rivers or the bay, the policeman to whose attention it is called gets it ashore; or unable to do this, secures it so that it will not be carried away by the current. Using a nearby telephone he then gives the news to Police Headquarters, and through headquarters is sometimes put in communication with his station house, in which case he makes a preliminary report to his sergeant. From Police Headquarters an order is sent to the Morgue for the "dead wagon" to remove the body. The Coroners' office is also notified, and a physician attached to that office is detailed to view the body and, if it is deemed advisable, perform an autopsy to ascertain the cause of death. The policeman after talking with headquarters gets a description of the body, searches it, learns who discovered it, and gathers as much informa-

tion bearing on the case as he can. He then goes to the station house and the report he makes there is repeated to headquarters.

When a prisoner is landed in a station house his captor makes a report to the sergeant, even before the prisoner is placed behind the bars, and in cases where someone has been injured the news is immediately telephoned to headquarters. Ordinary arrests are made known to headquarters in the written reports.

As travels the news of fires, accidents, the finding of bodies, and the taking of prisoners so goes that relating to hundreds of occurrences. Before the officers at Police Headquarters there is constantly displayed an ever changing panorama. Not much of it is pleasing, for through it all runs a touch of crime, misery, and destruction, but it is never commonplace. Always headquarters has a pretty clear idea of how the town is moving, and while the commissioner and the other officers may not be kept so well informed about the territory over which their authority extends, and the people in it, as are the high police officers of some great continental cities, they do learn a great deal more than is generally supposed. Their official newsgatherers are numbered by the thousand, and their unpaid spies, both men and women, are multitudinous. If a notorious criminal reaches the city his arrival is soon announced to the chief of detectives, and thereafter his movements are closely followed and his goings and comings are looked into with care. Should the wall of a building show signs of weakness and threaten to fall, the news gets to headquarters almost as hurriedly as does that of an accident, and a guard is set to warn away those who might run into danger. If a pedestrian is held up in the streets and robbed of his val-

ables, or a building is despoiled, the detectives, within a few hours at the outside, are spreading their nets. Should a paving stone break and thus prepare a pit-fall for the unwary, some officer at headquarters hears of it before long and starts the machinery that will repair the break. When a dead cat disfigures a street the news quickly travels to headquarters and soon a scavenger makes his appearance. To attract the attention of the police nothing is too great and few things are too small.

In the light of the foregoing explanation it can be seen that Police Headquarters is the great news center of the city. And when it is further explained that part of the information which reaches there, including all that having to do with fires, accidents, suicides, and murders, and part of that having to do with burglaries, brawls, and arrests, is disclosed to the newspapers, one can understand how the newspapers find out many of the things they tell about, and why they are not put to the expense of employing reporters to patrol the streets. The press bureau at Police Headquarters, where the news which there is no occasion for keeping secret is made public, never closes, and night and day, year in and year out, the newspapers, through the eyes of their reporters, watch its bulletins. Never is the watch half-hearted, either, for any moment may see displayed a bulletin which will lead to whole pages of newspaper writing. That they may be inspected at a glance the bulletins are written on slips of paper and hung in a window, as watches left for repairs are hung in a jeweler's window, and in the language of the reporters the bulletins or reports are always "slips." Incidentally, hanging behind glass, the slips do not disappear before all the reporters have had a chance to

look at them. For the convenience of their newsgatherers the newspapers maintain branch offices just across the street from Police Headquarters, and by telephones these offices are connected with the editorial rooms. Using the telephone the reporters communicate to their offices the bulletins they deem worth it as fast as they are displayed. In addition to a telephone, each branch office is equipped with a fire alarm signal on which is sounded every alarm for Manhattan and Bronx boroughs, and always at least one reporter remains within hearing of the gongs, for it is upon them that the newspapers depend for notifications of fires.

To show how the news is handled let it be supposed that a fire is discovered, and that someone sends in an alarm from box No. 232. Almost before the person who sent in the call for the firemen has lowered his hand from the box the gongs in the Police Headquarters newspaper offices sound two taps, three more after a pause, and two more after another pause. The complete signal is repeated twice, and usually before the second one has finished sounding the reporters, having referred to key books furnished by the Fire Department and thus learned the location of the signal box, are calling their city editors to tell them where they can look for a fire. Some city editors send a reporter in response to every alarm, but most of them do not have enough men for this and at some risk to themselves wait for more information before acting. Occasionally not caring to detail reporters on what may be useless errands, but not daring to wait, the city editors, using the public telephones, call shopkeepers shown by the telephone directory to be in the neighborhood of the fire, and endeavor to learn in this manner

whether it is a serious one. But, whether they do this or not, they await with some anxiety the second report from headquarters. This is never long in coming, for immediately after making known the receipt of an alarm the reporters begin to watch for the bulletin that represents the report made to his station house by the patrolman on whose beat the fire occurred. This report, when transmitted to the editors, tells them whether the services of reporters are needed, or whether they can dispose of the fire by instructing some office worker to write a few lines about it. Always, though, when following a first alarm, there comes a second calling for more apparatus, the editors hurry reporters out to get the news.

In the course of a day and a night there are about 100 bulletins displayed at Police Headquarters for the inspection of the newspaper representatives, and of the number there are very few that will not in a pinch furnish material for at least a couple of paragraphs. Here are some of the bulletins complete except for the date:

9th Pct. 7 A. M.

6.30 a. m. Annie Brown, 20 yrs. 7 Clarkson Street, fell downstairs, broke her leg: sent St. V. hosp.

P. B.

26th Pct. 7.30 A. M.

6.45 a. m. Look for William Smith, 78 yrs., slim, gray hair and whiskers, dark clothing, white shirt, lace shoes, derby hat; carried walking stick, stooped while walking; missing since May 10 from 989 West 83rd St.

E. B.

15th Pct. 8.15 A. M.

7.10 a. m. John Doe, attempted suicide, gas, 991  
East Forty-fifth Street, Bellevue Hosp. R. M.

2nd Pct. 8.15 A. M.

7.20 a. m. Body unknown man found off Pier 1,  
East River; about 40 years, 5 ft. 10 in.; light com-  
plexion, lace shoes, blue shirt, black coat and trousers.

J. W.

20th Pct. 9.10 A. M.

8.40 a. m. James Smith, 15 yrs. 655 West 37th  
Street, knocked down 37th St and 10th ave by car;  
fracture left leg, St V. hosp. B. A.

14th Pct. 10 A. M.

9.10 a. m. Runaway horse, belonging Jones & Co.,  
2200 Fourth avenue, stopped at 4th avenue and Thir-  
tieth street by Officer Blue. H. McA.

F. H. 10.10 A. M.

128 Franklin and Centre. Not. 6th Pct.

22nd Pct. 10.15 A. M.

9.40 a. m. Street car collision Broadway and 66th  
St. Robert Williams, merchant, Hoboken, cut by  
glass, Roosevelt hosp. H. T.

6th Pct. 10.30 A. M.

10.10 a. m. Fire 916 Franklin st. unoccupied stor-  
age warehouse, owner Henry James, 111 Broadway,  
\$300. R. M.

A little explanation will make these bulletins clear.  
The first one, which comes from the Ninth Precinct

station house, reached the telegraph bureau at 7 o'clock. The accident occurred at 6.30 o'clock and the injured person was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital. The initials at the end of the report are those of the sergeant who sent it to Police Headquarters. The report which is headed F. H., meaning Fire Headquarters, conveys the information that at 10.10 A. M. an alarm was sent in from box No. 128 at Franklin and Centre Streets, and that Police Headquarters has notified the Sixth Precinct station house. The last bulletin given is that submitted by the station house sergeant who received the notification of the fire. It will be noticed that twenty minutes after the fire was discovered, the sergeant, having received a report from the man on whose post it occurred, is able to tell headquarters where the fire was, who owned the building, and what damage was done.

Looking over the bulletins, the headquarters reporters, all men who have proved their ability and know the city thoroughly, pick out the valuable ones with astonishing facility. Here and there a bulletin which to the ordinary observer promises nothing, they pounce upon for a prize, while others which might be fancied by an outsider they dismiss with a single reading. No little responsibility rests upon the reporters, for the editors, although they complain when they are made to listen to worthless bulletins, never deal leniently with the men who make mistakes and withhold the wrong ones. In addition to the press bureau the reporters stationed at Police Headquarters keep under observation the offices of the commissioner and his deputies, where transfers, promotions, and dismissals are made known; the detective bureau, whence come some of the best police stories; the inspection

and license bureaus, and the bureau of information, where they sometimes learn of the loss or the finding of valuable articles, of persons missing from home, and the receipt of requests and information of various kinds from the police of other cities. The reporters always telephone bulletins to their offices, but getting long stories they sometimes write them and have them delivered by messengers. Reporters for the morning papers who are stationed at Police Headquarters go on duty early in the afternoon, and work until 3 o'clock the next morning. At 2 o'clock in the morning the reporters for the evening papers which print the very early editions begin a vigil which is continued until the middle of the morning, when they are relieved by men who continue the watch until late in the evening. Reporters for the other afternoon papers inspect the slips from 6 or 7 o'clock in the morning until their papers' last editions are printed.

While thankful for what they get, the headquarters reporters are always wishing that they might have access to the reports which are kept from them. These they know are the ones that would permit them to furnish sensations every day. Of most of the burglaries, street robberies, embezzlements, and swindles which are brought to the attention of the police the reporters never hear, and the direct result is that the public is led to believe that the city is a great deal better than it is. For the police never tell anything about any of these things until they have made an arrest. And even then the truth is not always told. The detectives, who usually take all the credit for important arrests, make themselves out to be veritable ferrets by telling wonderful tales about following clews, while they carefully conceal the fact that they got their in-

formation from some scoundrel who is a living refutation of the nonsense about honor among thieves. There is no honor among thieves, at least among the ones known to the police as professionals. If there were, few, not caught red-handed, would ever go to prison.

When a crime is reported to a station house the task of making an investigation is assigned by the captain or a sergeant to a set of men not heretofore mentioned. These are the precinct detectives, often called the wardmen, who, ranking usually as patrolmen, have no beats but are permitted to go around the precinct wherever they choose. They do not wear uniforms, but some of them proclaim their calling by dyeing their hair and mustaches a deep black and wearing half-inch soles on their shoes. Generally there are only two wardmen attached to a station house, but in some precincts there are as many as a score of policemen who wear citizen's clothing. On Broadway and other crowded thoroughfares there are always more policemen on guard than is apparent to the ordinary observer. Every captain has one wardman in whom he confides, and commonly, when blackmail is levied, this favored individual makes arrangements for the collection of the money. The wardmen are taken with him by a captain when he is transferred from one precinct to another, and consequently it does not take him long to establish himself in his new territory. The ordinary patrolman rarely has knowledge of the doings of the wardmen, and half the people on his beat might be paying to have their misdeeds overlooked without his knowing it to a certainty. Told to take no notice of certain places he might well be suspicious, but suspicion is not proof, as is learned by the persons who

now and then get the police force on the edge of reform, but never get it squarely over.

If a crime reported to a station house is of no great moment the precinct detectives labor alone, or assisted by some of the patrolmen wearing every-day clothing; but in an important case the chief of detectives details several of his men—most of whom rank as sergeants—to join in the investigation. These detectives are the real sleuths who shine so brilliantly in the newspapers. There are about 200 of them; so many that their chief does not know what to do with them all and would, were it not for the courts, lessen the number. They are known to the patrolmen and the newspaper reporters as central office, or front office men, and among them are a few genuine detectives who possess great shrewdness, and are not afraid of hard work. Those who are not competent, but cannot be removed from their places, are ordinarily detailed by their chief to visit pawnshops and junk shops in search of stolen goods. The pawnbrokers are compelled to keep a record of everything they receive, and on demand must display their pledges to the police.

Early when they are making an investigation, the detectives, if they suspect habitual criminals, those who make a business of crime, summon to their assistance men and women of whom the public never hears, but without whose aid there would be few professional thieves and other criminals taken. These are the stool pigeons, the "every-night citizens" already spoken of who collect information for the newspapers. Sneak thieves, burglars, pickpockets, dive-keepers, footpads, or touts, themselves, they sue for favor by spying on other law-breakers. Prowling around where criminals congregate they keep their ears open for chance words,

and coming into possession of information carry it straight to the detectives. Amateur thieves, unknown to their spies, the detectives catch, because the bad habits which lead them to steal place them under suspicion, and because, lacking experience, they do not go to the right places to dispose of their plunder.

There is one policeman who deserves special mention. This is the sergeant, a man of no little importance, especially when he presides over the station house desk. Past middle age, as he usually is, he has local history at his finger tips, and his stories of riots, rescues, fires, and what not are worth hearing. While in charge of the desk he has power to release a prisoner brought in, where it appears to him that the arrest was made unjustly, and frequently he is called upon to act as a judge. In poor neighborhoods everyone takes his troubles to the station house, and the sergeant's advice, proved good by experience, is generally accepted.

Day and night the desk sergeants, at intervals of a few hours, are visited by reporters, for some of the papers, not content with their Police Headquarters vigil, keep a fairly close watch on the station houses, assigning to one man the task of looking after five or six of them. These reporters, almost always beginners, tramp from one station house to another, stopping in each one to ask the sergeant if he has any news. A crusty sergeant will treat them with scant courtesy and give them nothing; a kindly one will give them encouragement and good advice without end, and now and then run the risk of incurring the displeasure of an officer of the department by putting them in possession of information worth making known. Getting an item, the reporters telephone it to

their offices. Sometimes a station house reporter will have two or three hospitals on his route, and some of them make occasional calls at the Morgue.

In the year 1905, the police of the entire city of New York arrested 198,356 persons, of whom 158,470 were males and 39,886 females. The number taken into custody by the Central Office detectives aggregated 3619, and 1534 persons, 105 of them women, were measured and photographed for the Rogues' Gallery. During the year 173 foundlings came into the hands of the police. Nineteen hundred and nineteen persons were reported missing of whom 1058 were on the "still missing" list at the end of the year. The police were notified of 693 suicides; they gave assistance to 473 persons who had attempted suicide and to 11,010 who were sick or destitute; found open and unprotected 2348 stores, 339 dwellings, 621 factories, 14 churches, and 1 bank; took notice of 2106 sudden deaths; shot, according to the official report, 2 horses and 245 mad dogs; issued permits for 1496 parades and 569 funerals; found 2360 lost children; arrested 1389 vagrants, of whom 696 were later committed to prison; conveyed, or had conveyed, to hospitals 28,568 persons, and to their homes 21,128; found 2170 animals astray, and reported 8486 fires.

In the light of the foregoing explanation of the duties of the police, the collection of news and its dissemination, it can be seen that, were they to be deprived of the assistance of the police, the newspapers would at once find themselves in a bad way. Murders they might hear of within a day or two, most accidents they would miss entirely; fires they might learn of through having reporters chase the engines; of robberies they would hear only occasionally; and of a

multitude of things connected with city life to which they now give attention they would hear not a word. A reporter, before he can understand the fundamental workings of a newspaper, must learn about its relations with the police, and nothing has been touched on here that a reporter should not know.

## CHAPTER VII

### POLICE COURTS AS NEWS CENTERS

LITTLE less productive of news than Police Headquarters are the magistrates' courts, the lowest criminal courts of the city, in which are arraigned all persons taken into custody by the police. By law it is provided that the arraignment must follow the arrest immediately, if the courts are open at the time, and any policeman who holds a prisoner unnecessarily before taking him to court may be punished by a fine or by dismissal from the force. Through these courts trail the town's very dregs, and scattered in with the dregs there is occasionally found a highly respected citizen arrested for some minor offense, such as failing to have the snow cleared from the sidewalk in front of his house; or maybe a bank cashier or a trusted clerk who has strayed from the paths of rectitude and been detected. The newspapers keep themselves informed concerning the identity of all persons who visit the magistrates' courts as prisoners, complainants, witnesses, or sightseers, by keeping a watch on them every minute while they are open for business. Every visitor is closely scrutinized by the reporters and none of the proceedings escapes them. To get his name into the newspapers through a magistrate's court it is not absolutely necessary for a prominent man to appear in person; his cook, his relative, or under some circumstances an acquaintance need only show himself,

and the reporters will see that the prominent man shines in the reflected light.

There are in Manhattan Borough six magistrates' courts, and in the Borough of the Bronx two. Officially they are classed as District Magistrates' Courts, but in the newspapers they are called police courts, and holding that few persons know them by their official titles, the reporters have given names to them all. There are no jury trials in these courts. Each one is presided over by a magistrate who has power to dispose of trivial cases forthwith, and who, having heard the evidence, decides whether prisoners charged with serious offenses shall be held for trial in a higher tribunal. Prisoners discharged by a magistrate may, however, be indicted and rearrested, and an adverse decision may be reversed by a higher trial court. In each court there are, except on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, when a morning session only is held, two sessions daily, one beginning at 9 o'clock in the morning and the second after an hour's recess at 2 in the afternoon.

The magistrate's seat, near which are those of the court clerks, is behind a desk which, extending from wall to wall, is unbroken by a gate. This arrangement is never departed from, for were there a gateway all the ward heelers and a good share of the other neighborhood celebrities would every day insist on passing through it in an endeavor to get on close terms with justice. The desk behind which the magistrate sits is higher than the head of a person standing on the main floor, and wishing to speak to him complainants, witnesses, and lawyers step up on a raised platform known as the bridge. On the side of this platform away from the magistrate is a low railing, back of

which the prisoners are arraigned standing, and unable to make himself heard, a prisoner has his words repeated to the magistrate by a policeman who stands on the bridge. At the policeman's elbow is stationed an interpreter, whose services in some courts are demanded almost as often as a prisoner is led to the railing.

A police court appears to have a fascination for certain classes of the city's population, and among its more persistent visitors as spectators are many who live lives which will not bear investigation. When a pickpocket is arraigned, some of his acquaintances are sure to be on hand to find out how he fares, and a burglar in court looking over the spectators can always find a friendly face. Detectives aware of this keep watch on the crowd that assembles when it becomes known that a notorious criminal is to be arraigned, and it is not uncommon for them to make arrests at the courtroom doors.

The crime and the misery that are uncovered in these minor courts are beyond the comprehension of all except those who have for long periods listened to the tales that are told in them. It is not unusual for the court policemen inured to suffering by years of contact with it to hear stories which draw bread money from their pockets, and occasionally they are compelled to listen to stories so revolting that they can with difficulty keep themselves from flying on the monsters brought to justice. Not a week passes that the magistrates and the policemen are not actually horrified. The newspapers rarely allow the disgusting and horrible stories which are laid bare before the magistrates to get into their columns, but even with these thrown out they get from the police courts every day about as varied a collection of news as it would be

possible to imagine. Supplementing the stories first brought to their attention at Police Headquarters with those procured in the courts, they could provide a pretty fair account of the city's happenings without going to any further trouble or expense.

Before the newspapers decided to co-operate each one of them kept a reporter stationed in every police court, but now there are only two men detailed to gather a court's news; one is a representative of the co-operative association, the other represents the two papers which do not belong to it. If they could take notes of a session's proceedings and do their writing after the adjournment the men could work independently, but as they have to write their articles while the magistrate is sitting, they are compelled if they are to miss nothing to follow the proceedings turn and turn about. Now and then a magistrate new to the bench refuses to recognize the reporters as possessing more rights than the ordinary spectators, and has them kept outside of the railing which divides the courtroom; but before long he realizes that there is a reason why privileges should be accorded them, and allows them to find places where they can hear what is said both by himself and by those who come before him, in whatever capacity.

The newspaper representatives appear in the courtroom a few minutes before 9 o'clock. Previous to this, though, they report to their city editors in person or by telephone, and ask if there are any instructions for them. On the scene of their labors they immediately begin to interrogate the detectives and the uniformed policemen whose presence proclaims that they have prisoners to arraign, and questioning some from each station house and some from Police Headquarters they

soon learn of any extraordinary happenings which may have occurred during the night. Knowing that reports of his exploits, appearing in the papers, will reach the officers of his department, a policeman is always glad to tell of an incident in which he figured with distinction, but not sure that he acted in a manner that will call for approbation, he is reluctant to talk. If they are repulsed by a policeman the reporters listen closely when the case in which he is interested is reached, and, getting the material necessary, write stories which will not add to his peace of mind when he sees them in print.

The newsgatherers make their plans according to the early reports they get from the policemen. If they learn that among the prisoners there are some, connected with whose arrest there are interesting stories, they agree to center their activities on these, and to pay no attention to the trivial cases. Should their inquiries, to their disappointment, force them to the conclusion that they will not get an opportunity to write long stories, they go up on the bridge in search of morsels which in the aggregate will fill an appreciable space in the papers, even if they are not worth much separately. In a pinch the prisoners who are present in greatest number, those arrested while intoxicated, can be depended upon to furnish material for writing. There are arraigned in a court, daily, anywhere from a half-dozen to fifty of these offenders, and there are always some whose replies when they are questioned are worth repeating in print.

As soon as he has procured material for one or two stories, one of the reporters withdraws to write them, leaving his fellow worker on the bridge to follow the proceedings. In most courts there are anterooms

which the reporters are permitted to occupy, but in others they have no better accommodation than a small table which stands in a corner, and is largely monopolized by lawyers and policemen. His stories written, the first reporter returns to the bridge, and the other man takes a turn at writing. So they work while the session lasts, consulting together and comparing notes and written stories, at brief intervals. But the reporters, were they to confine themselves to the official proceedings, would send few interesting stories to their offices, for commonly in the actual hearing details are omitted. What the reporters do is to rely upon the proceedings for main facts only, and procure their complete stories from the policemen, complainants, and witnesses.

Let it be supposed that a burglar who is captured in a house into which he had broken is haled into court. The reporters, learning of his presence, get the ear of his captor, and after hearing his story turn to the householder, who will be present to give his testimony, and from him glean the information necessary to fill out their accounts. They now write their articles without waiting for the case to be brought to the magistrate's attention, completing them probably about the time the burglar is arraigned. When the arraignment is made the householder testifies that the prisoner was captured on his premises, and the policeman tells briefly about the arrest, whereupon the magistrate ends the proceedings by holding the prisoner for trial in a higher court. Their stories already written, the reporters send them to their offices by messengers, after delaying no longer than is necessary to add the magistrate's action.

Occasionally, when the arraignment is slow in com-

ing they send their stories to their offices without waiting for the hearing, and thus it sometimes happens that in one edition of a paper a person is, in view of a policeman's tale, set forth as a criminal of the worst type, while in a later one it is announced that he was accused unjustly, and was set free when the magistrate heard the testimony. None of the stories which the reporters collect in the courtroom corners are matters of record, and because of this a police court is a regular incubator of libel suits. And the reporters are placed between two fires. If they write bare accurate accounts of the official proceedings and hold stories for the decisions, they are told in no uncertain words that details are wanted, and reminded that they are not working for weekly publications, while if they collect details and hurry their stories along they expose themselves to the danger of involving their papers in litigation, and ruining their own reputations for veracity and trustworthiness.

In the police courts of Manhattan and Bronx boroughs there were 147,925 prisoners arraigned in the year 1905, and of these 102,137 were under the summary jurisdiction of the magistrates. In addition the magistrates in this year had to deal with over 125,000 summons cases. The persons who want summonses are the bane of a magistrate's existence. He will not issue a warrant unless he has a fair amount of proof that an offense has been committed. But a summons he will issue on assertion alone, and knowing this the tenement population avails itself of summonses. As soon as two women get in a tenement-house quarrel one of them posts off to the nearest police court to call the actions of her antagonist to the attention of the magistrate. Then the alleged wrongdoer

gets a summons, which is nothing more than an invitation to appear and give an explanation of what on the surface looks like a breach of the peace. In court she is neither regarded nor treated as a prisoner unless her explanation shows that the assertion of wrongdoing made by her neighbor was true, in which case the magistrate may order her arrest forthwith. About two-thirds of the summons cases come to nothing, but they take time, and on uneventful days they give the reporters opportunities to try their hands at dialogue and dialect.

At intervals in the course of the day messengers sent from the newspaper offices call for the articles prepared by the police-court reporters, but important news the reporters telephone to their papers. Late in the afternoon, though, news must be of more than casual importance to receive attention from the evening papers. At the close of the day the police-court reporters go to their offices, rewrite their stories for the use of the morning papers, and after this, every other night at least, work three or four hours with the general newsgatherers.

## CHAPTER VIII

### STARTING THE DAY'S WORK

EVEN knowing the places where news is looked for and the manner in which a part of it is collected, one must learn something about the routine of a newspaper office and the relations existing between morning and evening publications before he can comprehend how a city editor plans his work and how he distributes and directs his reporters.

In the office of a morning newspaper which publishes a paper on Sunday, and most of the big ones do issue Sunday editions, work goes on from one end of the year to the other without a break. For both editors and reporters Sunday is different from no other day, for while each man who receives a salary gets one day for rest out of every seven, the editors arrange to have an equal number away each day the week around. Allowed to choose for themselves the time when they shall stay away from the office, most of the workers select a week-day, having in mind the theaters and other places of amusement. The space-paid reporters, like the salaried men, are permitted to take one day off every week, but there is no compulsion about this, and some of them, anxious to make their incomes as large as possible, do not miss a day for months at a time. The largest morning papers do not suspend publication on any of the holidays. In a majority of the evening newspaper offices there is a break

once a week, no paper being issued on Sunday, and most evening papers suspend publication on one holiday—Christmas. For all newspaper workers in the large cities Decoration Day and the Fourth of July mean extra effort, as on these occasions there are parades, public meetings, and a great number of athletic meets to be reported. Labor Day is, with the possible exception of Election Day, the busiest day of the year. On it so many races and athletic games are held that the city editor and the sporting editor always have trouble in planning so that there shall be enough reporters to go around.

When no paper is issued on Sunday, it may be considered that in an evening paper office a new chapter is begun every Monday morning; and a responsible place is held by the man who on this, as on the other mornings, begins the work, lays the foundations upon which the editors and the reporters later build. He must be able to gauge with great accuracy the news value of any occurrence that comes to his notice, and it is essential that he be a very rapid worker. Usually he is one of the paper's copy readers, and where this is the case it often happens that many of the reporters think of him as a copy reader only, either knowing nothing about or failing to appreciate the important work he performs long before the majority of the staff report for duty.

There is at the start only one source from which the foundation builder can glean material. That source is the newly issued morning papers, and while searching them he cannot help realizing that between morning papers and evening papers considered as classes there exists an exceedingly close relationship. He sees that those of one class continually obtain aid

from those of the other, and that in a sense the two classes move in a circle, one always beginning where the other leaves off.

Having procured copies of all the morning papers published in his city, and when he starts to work very early he has to get some of them in roundabout ways, the foundation builder wastes no time before beginning his search. Stories of two kinds are in demand: first and most important, stories which are capable of development, as the account of a prisoner's escape; and second, stories which, while complete in themselves, are worth rewriting. Starting his work the foundation builder always attacks first the paper in which he expects to find the most news. He strives to get every sentence, but trained to read rapidly, and hurried as he always is, he moves his eyes down a column in a fraction of the time that would be required by an ordinary reader. When he encounters an article which he thinks will be of use he marks it by drawing a circle around its heading. Through with his first paper he takes up the one he considers the next best, and this process he continues until he has disposed of them all.

To illustrate the methods of the early morning reader, let it be supposed that he comes across an account of a political meeting. Should the article show that the meeting was devoid of interest and of no importance, he dismisses it offhand. Should he find, however, that the meeting, while devoid of sensations, was well attended; that good speeches were made, and that the audience was enthusiastic, he marks the article while deciding to have it rewritten. The third possibility is the greatest. At the meeting, primarily important or not, one of the speakers may have made a personal or particularly violent political attack

on some man in the public eye; there may have been a clash among those in charge of the meeting; or again, the meeting may have ended in disorder. Whatever the unusual feature the reader pounces upon it. If one of the speakers has assailed someone, a reporter will have to be detailed to ask him whether he has been correctly quoted, what impelled him to make the attack, and whether he has anything to add to his reported remarks. Also, the same reporter or another one will have to be assigned to get a talk with the man assailed, who, glad of the chance to defend himself, may be expected to talk about the motive of the speaker; and the chances are that the article reciting what he says will prove to be at least as interesting as the one containing the attack. Sometimes, too, the men who presided at the meeting will have to be asked to express their opinions. In case the meeting broke up in disorder or there was a clash, the afternoon paper will have to ascertain whether there were any occurrences not recorded in the morning papers, what caused the row, whether there is a likelihood that there will be future trouble, and what the party leaders think about the affair. Sometimes the story has an end which leads to a police court, and there have been political meetings which made it necessary for the reporters to visit the Morgue.

If the reader, through with the account of the political meeting, finds a story dealing with a big fire of the night before, he marks it, knowing that many persons will want to know more than the morning papers told them. There is always the possibility that bodies will be found in the ruins and it may be that evidence will be uncovered indicating incendiarism. The news-gatherer who will be sent to report the fire will find plenty to do; the owner of the building will have to be

seen, the agents who insured it, the tenants, the firemen sometimes, and the police almost always.

Learning next that James Brown, the prominent banker, has been arrested for running his automobile through the streets at high speed, the reader marks the article telling of the occurrence, because everyone will want to know what happened to Mr. Brown when he was arraigned before a magistrate.

A visiting prince is going to sail for Europe on one of the fast steamships. He must be seen at the pier and interviewed, so the article that tells of his approaching departure is marked.

So is the one which says that a widely known resident of the city is to be married. If the report is true, the man will probably be glad to confirm it; if it is not, he may be induced to talk about busy-bodies. And if the man does deny the truth of the published announcement, the paper will have to look alive, for then there is a possibility that a breach of promise suit is brewing.

A story dispatched from some town in a remote section of the state tells the reader that a much-respected citizen of the place has disappeared after having despoiled the bank of which he was cashier of so much money that the depositors are afraid the institution will not be able to meet its obligations. The story says that the missing man, it has been learned since his flight, was infatuated with a woman who once lived in his town, but was last heard of, say in Backville, Ohio, and that the police of Backville have been asked to watch for him. Here is a tale with many ends. From the town in which the bank is situated the afternoon paper will have to procure a story, giving the amount of the defalcation, the events connected with the cashier's flight, the time of his departure, and

the direction he is thought to have taken. A talk with one of the bank officers will also be in demand, and it must be arranged to have a watch kept for a possible "run" on the institution. The Backville correspondent will have to be told to ascertain the whereabouts of the woman with whom the cashier was on such good terms, and if possible get her to talk about the thief and his flight; and this correspondent must also be instructed to keep in touch with the police of his town, so that, should the missing man fall into their clutches, the paper will be promptly informed of the fact. In addition to these out-of-town ends of the story there are local features which will demand attention. The local police will have to be asked whether they have any reason to believe that the fugitive is striving to reach the territory which they guard, and the reporter at Police Headquarters will have to be instructed to watch the slips displayed there with more than ordinary care. Another local end to the story will be found in the financial district of the city. Some bank there is, in all probability, the correspondent of the despoiled institution, and a reporter will have to be detailed to ascertain whether the local bank will suffer if the out-of-town institution fails, and if so, to what extent. Also some of the officers of the local bank may have personal knowledge of the missing cashier, and so be able to tell something about his habits and name some of the persons in the city with whom he is acquainted and who might possibly know of his whereabouts.

It sometimes happens that the marriage notices furnish the foundation for good news stories, so they are never neglected by the foundation builder. The name of a well-known or notorious person attracts his atten-

tion as would a diamond, and he reads every notice to the end to see whether any of the lovers went to the top of the Statue of Liberty or to some other unusual place to have the ceremony uniting them performed. It used to be that weddings of this kind were recorded every few weeks, but of recent years the crop of notoriety-seeking lovers has fallen off, and it is not often that a wedding furnishes a theme for the newspapers' humorous writers. Frequently, though, the reader does find announcements of marriages performed months or years before, and these he marks for the attention of a reporter who will be detailed to call on the married pair, their relatives, and the minister who performed the ceremony, to ascertain, if possible, why the wedding was kept a secret and what led to the decision to make it public. Almost always there are stories which would be worth the writing back of these delayed marriage notices, but they frequently elude the reporter's grasp.

Other fields never neglected are the death lists. Here, too, the reader watches for familiar names, and peculiarly worded notices. Also he keeps a lookout for similar names, for when two persons in one family die at the same time, or near it, the public's attention must be called to the fact more pointedly than it is by the publication of the formal announcements. A name appearing in both the marriage and death notices always arrests attention, as it probably indicates a death-bed marriage.

How dangerous it is for a paid newspaper reader to overlook an item, or fail to grasp the possibilities of one he does read, is illustrated by an incident which occurred in New York several years ago. There was brought into port one day a handful of persons who,

when picked up at sea while floating about in a lifeboat, made known an awful catastrophe. While plowing through a fog the vessel on which they had started across the Atlantic had collided with another vessel and gone down before many of the 400 persons aboard had had time to realize what was happening. When they were placed safe on land the rescued persons were looked upon as the only survivors of the wreck. The newspapers, of course, devoted whole pages to the disaster. They told again and again how the wrecked vessel, and another one the identity of which had not yet been established, had come together in the fog; how one had floated away and been lost sight of, and how the passengers and crew of the other who reached the deck had fought for possession of the lifeboats, the only hope of safety. For a week there was little else in the papers than news of the disaster. Just when the wreck news was beginning to get noticeably threadbare there arrived at a nearby port a storm-wrecked, lumber-laden schooner which had for passengers a half-dozen more survivors who had been blown away to the westward from the scene of the disaster in a tiny boat. No more of the wrecked vessel's passengers were ever found, although the ship which had collided with her and afterward floated away reached land after a long delay due to injuries received in the collision. The landing of the persons rescued by the schooner gave the reporters fresh material upon which to work, and they again wrote long stories, parts of which were now devoted to the heroism of the lumber-carrier's crew. None of the reporters who talked with the second lot of survivors and with the schooner's crew made much of it, but several of them mentioned the fact in their stories that the schooner,

after picking up the boat, had run to a certain coast town and there taken aboard a stock of provisions to feed the unexpected passengers. Reading a reference to this landing, one man whose duty it was to search for material remembered that on the day before the steamship which made the disaster known had reached port, he had seen and partly read in a paper other than that on which he was employed a brief item sent from this coast town saying that a lumber schooner which was then anchored offshore waiting for a storm to pass had late the night before sent a man ashore for provisions, and that it was reported that the schooner had aboard several survivors of a wreck at sea. Comprehending what had been hidden in the stray item so carelessly read, the newspaper reader was brought almost to tears; first because he had lost a chance to get a beat for his paper which would have caused talk all over the world; again for joy that no other reader, more keen and careful than he, had realized the item's worth and set in motion the machinery which would have made known the loss of the steamship hours before the first lot of survivors were put ashore and set on high his paper's reputation, and to a lesser extent, his own.

After he has finished reading his papers, the foundation builder, who in the office vernacular is the "man who reads the papers," goes through them with a pair of shears and cuts out the marked articles. Most readers while doing their reading use two copies of each paper, marking the odd-numbered pages of one and the even-numbered pages of the other, so that wielding the shears they do not mutilate one article while clipping another.

After finishing his clipping the reader goes over the

articles cut out, underscoring with a pencil the names of persons who must be seen by reporters, and inclosing in circles important paragraphs. This task completed he begins to make out two schedules of the stories which need attention. In one, which is intended for the city editor, he lists all those which have to do with city happenings or have a local end; in the other, which is for the telegraph editor, he lists all the out-of-town stories. To a story which calls for the attention of only one reporter the reader gives a single line, as "Broome Street Fire," or "Street Car Crash." But scheduling one which calls for the service of several newsgatherers, or is somewhat involved, he puts down a number of sub-heads under the main title. When he has listed his clippings the reader is nearly finished with one part of his work. To complete it he need only procure the "future books," big diaries in which are kept records of coming events, and add to his schedules a list of the events marked for the current date. The "future books" are under the direct care of the city editor and the telegraph editor, both of whom contribute to them many times every day. His schedules completed, the foundation builder is free to take up the second phase of his work.

In the office of an evening paper which issues a very early edition the man who reads the papers begins work at 2 o'clock in the morning, and half an hour later the four or five reporters constituting what among newspaper men is known as the "gas house gang," because supposedly there are some gas house laborers who start to work at 2.30 o'clock in the morning, report for duty. Almost always these reporters, who usually refer to their period of work as the "lobster trick," arrive sleepy-eyed and out of humor.

Some of them have left their beds as early as 1 o'clock, and it is unusual when they do not have tales to tell of long waits for street cars, and poorly cooked and hastily eaten breakfasts procured in miserable excuses for restaurants. To each of the early reporters, as soon as he has hung up his hat and dusted his desk, the man who is reading the papers hands several articles which are to be rewritten. Ordinarily the reporter is told only how long to make each article, but occasionally he is instructed how to start one, and which features to make prominent in it. So far as he is able, the reader distributes only stories which can be rewritten without fear of involving the paper in libel suits. Accounts of fires and accidents he knows are safe; articles having to do with arrests he holds back when he has enough other material to keep the reporters busy; and attacks on individuals or companies he lays aside for the attention of the city editor and the assistant managing editor, unless they are of such moment that some mention of them must be made in the first edition, in which case he has them rewritten, but marks them "Wait Orders" so that they will not be printed unless released by one of the editors. As fast as they finish rewriting the stories given to them, the early reporters call for new clippings, and this they keep up until the foundation builder has exhausted his supply.

The reporters do their rewriting at top speed, and there is a good-sized pile of manuscript waiting by the time the man who reads the papers is through with his morning papers and his schedules. Immediately he begins to edit the new articles, place headings on them, and send them off to the composing room, to be turned into type. In most offices the early morning

reader and his reporters make no distinction between local and out-of-town news, but in some the assistant telegraph editor, reaching the office about the time that the early reporters appear, joins in the task of reading the morning papers, looking, however, for out-of-town news exclusively, and, through with them, sends instructions to a few of the correspondents and begins to rewrite the important articles that he has clipped.

Usually, before the early reporters are nearly through with their rewriting, the man under whose direction they work, answering a call on the telephone, finds the watcher at Police Headquarters ready to give several slips. The early morning hours are prolific of fires, accidents, suicides, and raids on places where the law is being broken, and often the Police Headquarters man, having used the wires judiciously, is able to give a pretty fair account of the affair with which his best bulletin deals. If the watcher has enough facts a reporter is directed to take them from him at once and embody them in an article. The headquarters watcher knows that the man in charge of the office is anxious to get a story which will bear a big-type heading and display on the front page of the first edition, so often, not thinking his story quite up to the mark, he adds a few touches of fancy to improve it. The reporter who does the writing sometimes finding even the embellished facts insufficient for the kind of article he knows is desired, and not knowing of the headquarters man's action, allows his own imagination to soar a little. The result is that days on which the first edition fails to make prominent a local story are few. Should the headquarters watcher be unable to give details, reporters are sent out to make investigations as soon as the rewriting is completed.

Here it may be pointed out that there are times when the early morning men, in the light of past experiences, confidently expect certain kinds of news. For example, they are disappointed if they do not receive word of several suicides on Monday morning; and most of these Monday morning suicides are laborers or other small wage earners. Commonly the stories are much alike. The suicide, receiving his pay for his week's work on Saturday evening, started to drink and continued his debauch over Sunday; waking Monday morning unnerved, miserable, and penniless, with the week's labor in front of him, he cut his throat, or shot or hanged himself. Where the suicide is a woman, however, another method of self-destruction is generally employed; drowning and the swallowing of carbolic acid are the common methods chosen by women. In the summer, suicides are always expected after a particularly hot night when sleep has been next to impossible. The reporters do not look for as many self-murders in winter as in summer, and they are mildly astonished when anyone jumps into the river while it is filled with floating ice, for most persons who are bent on self-destruction give some thought as to what is to become of their bodies.

But on especially cold mornings the reporters do look forward to an increase in the number of fires, due to the fact that householders on these occasions, in their efforts to keep warm, heat their stoves and furnaces to a point beyond the safety limit. The first real cold morning of the winter invariably sees many fires, for the reason that furnaces and chimneys have fallen into disrepair during the summer, and thus permit the escape of sparks which ignite woodwork or accumulated dust and rubbish. Almost every Saturday morn-

ing, too, there are fires started in the crowded districts in buildings occupied by orthodox Jewish families. These people, who are forbidden by their religion to build fires in their stoves on this day, their Sunday, turn the task over to old women outside of their faith who go about from house to house. The "fire-lighters," in a hurry, frequently coax the fires along through the dangerous method of pouring oil on them, and now and then one of them sets her own clothing ablaze. When this happens the first policeman who reaches the scene may find it necessary to summon a patrol wagon to remove the body to the station house, which is not unlikely the first station on the way to the Potter's Field.

A person unacquainted with newspaper work might think that rewriting was mere routine, calling for no accomplishment other than ability to write rapidly, and that only the poorest reporters, the plodders, would be called upon to do this work. Not so. The men who do this rewriting without instruction must possess a lot of skill, and in the office of an evening newspaper which issues an early morning edition they are among the best on the staff; a greenhorn could no more keep pace with them than he could with the managing editor. Where an early edition is issued there is little time for making corrections and polishing, and the rewritten articles must come from the reporters in good shape. In the offices of those papers which do not print an edition until the middle of the morning, beginners often assist in the rewriting, but they have to be told how to handle every story turned over to them, which makes them little more than copyists.

The men who do rewriting always condense, but they think little of this feature; their particular aim

is to give new turns to the stories turned over to them which shall make them read like real news and not like rehashed articles. An experienced newspaper worker can tell a rewritten story readily enough, but the general public, it is presumed, cannot, and if here and there an outsider does detect the touch of the early morning writer, he has neither cause nor opportunity to announce the fact sufficiently loud to make the matter town talk. Let it be supposed that there is to be condensed into a quarter of a column a story of a fire which occupies a column in one of the morning papers. The fire, according to the printed account, was in a crowded East Side tenement. It started just before midnight from some unknown cause and a panic followed. The firemen rescued a score of persons, but after the flames had been extinguished they found three bodies in the ruins. As a number of persons were missing it was feared that other lives had been lost. A reporter unaccustomed to early morning work, rewriting this story, might begin something like this:

"Three persons lost their lives in a fire in a tenement house on the East Side last night. The fire, the origin of which is unknown, occurred in the five-story brick house at 1981 Norfolk Street and was extinguished only after the building had been destroyed. During the progress of the blaze the firemen rescued a score of persons, carrying them down ladders from upper-story windows, and from the roof. The bodies of the three persons who lost their lives were discovered after the flames had been brought under control, and it was feared that a thorough search of the building would result in the finding of others. Had it not been for the prompt action of the firemen the death list would cer-

tainly have been a larger one. The bodies found were those of Jacob Cohen, aged 38, Morris Levi, aged 27, and Isaac Levi, aged 53."

The trained rewriter, with an eye to the main chance, would construct his story on a different plan. Probably he would write an introduction much like the following, taking care to paragraph frequently:

"Firemen were busy to-day searching for more bodies in the ruins of the tenement house at 1981 Norfolk Street, which was burned early this morning. Already three have been recovered, and it is feared that many more will be found, as a number of people who lived in the house are reported missing by their friends. The bodies taken from the ruins have been identified as those of:

"Jacob Cohen, 38 years old.

"Morris Levi, 27 years old.

"Isaac Levi, 53 years old.

"While the firemen continued their search crowds of persons whose relatives were among the missing gathered in the neighborhood, and repeatedly the police were compelled to drive away frenzied men and women who insisted on breaking through the fire lines to join in the hunt.

"The origin of the fire is a mystery, and the fire marshal will make an investigation. Some of those who visited the scene to-day declared that the blaze had been started by incendiaries.

"While the building was burning the firemen rescued a score of half-dressed persons who had been trapped by the flames, taking them from upper windows,

and from the roof. A panic followed the discovery of the fire, and many of those who escaped unaided reached the street badly bruised, having had to fight their way through the crowded hallways and stair-cases."

Examples of this kind of rewriting may be found every day in the afternoon papers, although the more conservative journals do not strike so high a key. The rewritten fire story might appear to be exaggerated and overdrawn throughout, but when an analysis is made it is not so easy to pick out any one sentence and pronounce it false. Having reported tenement house fires himself the trained rewriter knows that certain incidents are connected with all of them, and he has only put down what he knows has happened. But trying to make the account of the fire fresh and so attractive to the purchasers of his paper, who want no stale news, he has distorted the facts just a little. He has made it appear as if the firemen were still searching the ruins, and as if crowds in search of relatives and friends still surrounded the scene of the fire, when the probable truth is that the firemen ascertained that only three lives had been lost a half hour after the flames had been extinguished, and that when they took their apparatus away the persons attracted by curiosity disappeared for the time, making it possible for the members of the homeless families to find one another and seek refuge with neighbors. The rewriter has only put down, as if it were continuing, what did take place in the past.

An article which has to do with the destruction of an office building which burned without loss of life often allows the rewriter to start as follows:

"Great crowds to-day viewed the ruins of the Skyscraper Building which was burned early this morning."

Of course if the fire occurred much before midnight he cannot use "early this morning," but he usually manages to get "to-day" near the front of the opening paragraph.

Occasionally a fire gives an opportunity for this kind of a rewrite:

"That all of the so-called fire-proof buildings are not proof against fire was acknowledged to-day by many builders and insurance men who viewed the heaps of débris which marked the site where the Highup office building stood before it burned last night. The fire started in the basement, and within two hours the structure was a wreck."

There are few stories to which the experienced re-writer cannot give a new turn, and it is all the same to him whether he writes about a fire, a murder, a business failure, or the launching of a ship. He can write with equal facility:

"The police are scouring the city for clews which will lead to the discovery of the murderers of James Smith."

"Experts engaged by the assignee were to-day set to work on the books of Brown & Jones, who failed yesterday for \$300,000."

"Hundreds of visitors were to-day inspecting the newly launched steamship *Jupiter*, which was anchored off the shipyard of Spars & Masts."

Where an early edition is issued the rewriters aim to clear their desks by 6.30 o'clock, at which time the city editor appears. Thereafter they, as well as the reader, work under his direction. The arrival of the city editor is closely followed by that of the assistant managing editor, who, after looking over the material prepared for publication, makes up the first edition, and gives the word to start the presses. The assistant managing editor does not, however, have to make up every page before a paper can be printed. The editorial page, and those devoted to comic pictures and general reading not strictly news, are made up late in the afternoon of the day preceding their publication, and late at night, under the direction of the sporting editor or his assistant, the pages containing sporting news are made ready to be sent to the pressroom. At most, therefore, in the early morning the assistant managing editor must deal with three or four pages. The reader who began the day's work is allowed to leave at 9 o'clock, and the reporters who have done early morning rewriting customarily get away an hour later. When a city editor reaches his office at 6.30 o'clock, he makes way for his assistant about noon. In those offices which do not issue a paper until the morning is well advanced the reader begins work at 6 o'clock and is joined within half an hour by the early reporters, who, like him, are permitted to quit at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. In these offices the city editor, the telegraph editor, the copy readers, and the majority of the reporters start their day at 8 o'clock.

Where an edition is issued late in the evening the reporters are divided into squads which work late turn and turn about.

On a morning newspaper the day is started by the assistant city editor, who reaches the office at 10 o'clock in the morning and immediately begins to read and clip from the rival morning papers and the editions of the evening papers then procurable. The city editor arrives at 11 o'clock and about an hour later the reporters begin to appear. Having plenty of time before him and a larger force of reporters than is maintained by an evening newspaper, the city editor of a morning newspaper is not compelled to set men to rewriting. Wanting something written about an occurrence he turns the matter over to a reporter, who is supposed to make a thorough investigation on his own account. If the reporter chooses to glean his facts from the evening papers he does so at his own risk and keeps his own counsel.

## CHAPTER IX

### WHAT THE CITY EDITOR DOES

ALTHOUGH every newspaper worker, be the place he occupies high or low, has plenty of difficulties with which to contend, there is none who has more than the city editor, the man who directs the gathering of the local news and supervises its preparation for publication. Above him are the owner, the editor-in-chief, the managing editor and his assistant, and actually, although not theoretically, the business manager. Under him are all the local newsgatherers and the local copy readers. And both those above him and those below him look upon him as a fair mark. The managing editor, when anything goes wrong in the local department, when a piece of news is missed or when a poorly written or libelous story, or a weak heading gets into the paper, goes to him, either of his own accord or acting on a suggestion, and without beating around the bush, demands an explanation. The reporter who does not know how to get the news or how to write what he has got, just as promptly goes to the city editor and asks for detailed instructions. It is the city editor's duty, he intimates, to set him right. Then if having been told how to proceed he comes to grief he declares vehemently, when called to account, that the fault is not his, as he simply followed directions. The copy readers, who edit the articles written by the reporters, appeal to the city editor on a thousand pre-

texts, and are delighted when they can force him to commit himself. They would like to have him pass judgment on everything they do.

The duties of the city editor, whose field embraces the whole city, and, in some offices, all territory within a radius of 100 miles of it, when viewed closely are seen to be decidedly complex. First, he must find out where there is news to gather, and this means that he must keep his watchers alive and that he must be able to tell just what is news and possess the ability to weigh whatever comes to his notice; next, he must direct the work of gathering the news; and last, he must get the news into the paper in good shape, readable and accurate. How he is to perform his multitudinous duties is for him to determine, and should he fail it is not sufficient for him to declare that he has not half enough reporters; that many of those he does have are incompetent; or that his copy readers fall far short of the mark. Making one of these pleas or almost any other, he is quickly told that it would be nothing more than play to be city editor under ideal conditions, and that a cheaper man would hold his place were it not realized that there were a few obstacles to be overcome.

Because there is usually more news offered than can be printed, the city editor must be able at any time to sift out accurately and quickly the unimportant matter which may with safety be thrown away. But almost as important is it that he possess the skill to furnish, when the necessity arises, substitutes for news so cleverly gilded that the general public cannot detect the counterfeit, for now and then there comes a day when the world apparently goes to sleep, the good and the bad together. Ordinarily, when empty columns

are filled under pressure, a paper makes thrilling appeals for more schoolhouses, a better water supply, cleaner streets, and a more efficient police force. But a particularly keen-witted city editor avoids these old-time wants and enables his paper to call for things not so often before demanded. The city editor who is compelled to work short-handed, and a good many of them are, is frequently driven to another expedient, that of having one man generalize and so gloss over the absence of facts which should be presented and would be, were there available men to collect them. For example, when a heavy snowstorm strikes the city, there is news to be gathered at every railroad station, at every ferry-house, at the offices of the men who will have to superintend the clearing of the streets, and at several other places. Were they on hand the city editor would detail a half-dozen newsgatherers to report the snowstorm. But not having them he sends one or two men out to gather facts, and sets another who has a vivid imagination at work in the office to write page after page of what newspaper men call "guff." In half the time it would take him to go up-town and ascertain whether the trains from Boston were late, the office writer will turn out a column-long story, telling about the shivering crowds walking through the streets, the woes of the suburbanites delayed in reaching the city, the suffering of the horses compelled to pull heavy loads through drifts, and maybe the fairyland-like appearance of the snow-festooned trees in the parks. This story, adorned here and there by a fact procured by the reporters sent out of the office, the hard-pressed city editor must print as a report of the storm. On an exceedingly hot day the office writer tells about the crowds around the

soda water fountains, and the fat man with the wilted collar; and when there is a financial panic he never fails to harp on the white-faced brokers. A resourceful city editor can make suggestions almost without end in an emergency.

If the city editor of a morning paper is a quick thinker, resourceful, and cool-headed, the affairs of his office will, of course, proceed much more smoothly than they would otherwise. But the city editor of an evening publication must be all these things to be of much worth, for in his establishment there is a constant rush and an unending strain on the nerves. He must keep himself well in hand, no matter what goes wrong, and be able to act without hesitation, for the man who can get out an extra edition within fifteen minutes of the time he hears of the event which makes it necessary, is in the evening newspaper world considered far more efficient than the man who requires seventeen minutes to get the same result.

The rush in a morning newspaper office comes only once in twenty-four hours and is not, even at its height, worse than that which prevails in an evening paper office all day long. Yet the city editor of a morning paper enjoys no easy berth. He has more time in which to do his work, and he has more copy readers and reporters than has the evening paper city editor, but to offset these advantages, more is required of him. It is expected that his reporters, while making their investigations, will dig out minute as well as main facts, and that they will write smooth, well-reading stories which will appear in the paper unmarked by the slips that tell of haste; and when there is failure in any particular the managing editor is quick to complain. Held to a

high standard, the morning paper city editor must remain a particularly exacting critic.

Whether it is a morning or an evening publication on which he is employed, the city editor always begins his day's work by inspecting the schedule prepared by the man who reads the papers, and follows this, in case there are no rewritten stories for him to look over, by reading fairly closely the clippings on which the schedule is based. The schedule and the clippings combined give him a clear idea of the news in sight, and after making any additions to the schedule which suggest themselves, he is ready to begin assigning his reporters. A competent city editor has all of his men accurately measured. He knows which ones are good at unraveling mysteries, which are only fair at finding news, but can write entertainingly about what they do find; which are good at humorous writing; which, excelling in no particular line, can always be depended upon to do fairly well, whatever their task; which have a special knowledge of business, and are therefore fitted to report failures or the starting of new ventures; which understand mechanics; which have studied medicine or law; in short, he can tell on what kind of an incident each man can do his best, and therefore, which man can best handle any story that is to be reported.

When he distributes his newsgatherers to the best advantage, a city editor proves himself competent in one part of his work at least, for it can easily be seen that a staff of excellent reporters might be assigned in such a manner that not one of them would be able to do his best. The prize humorous writer, if he were unfamiliar with police work, would make a sorry spectacle of himself and his paper were he compelled to match his wits against those of the rival reporters and the

detectives engaged in trying to clear up a murder mystery, and he would probably do almost as poorly were he sent to report the trial trip of a new warship. The reporter trained only to collect the news of the steamships and the shipping offices would certainly flounder were he detailed to report a wedding, and the man who customarily gathered court news, were he sent to report a big fire, might do even worse.

Among the New York newspaper workers a story is told which well illustrates the possibilities of a mix-up in the reporters' room. A man, who had had no experience even as a reporter, was through some misunderstanding taken from the business office of a certain paper and installed as its city editor. On the morning that he assumed the duties of his new place he assembled the newsgatherers, and having asked each man to hand in his name written on a slip of paper, arranged the slips alphabetically and began to give out the assignments. The reporter whose name happened to come first, a novice, was detailed to report a conference of political leaders, the important event of the day; one of the sporting editor's assistants was told to investigate a highway robbery, and a court reporter was instructed to report a public trial of a newly invented fire-engine. Scarce a man got the kind of work to which he was accustomed, but grasping the humor of the situation they all kept quiet, until the acknowledged leader of the staff, an excellent newsgatherer and clever writer, whose name happened to come at the end of the list, was ordered to look into the rumor that a little girl living in the outlying district above the Harlem River had been bitten by a mad dog. Then there was an explosion. The new city editor, instead of becoming angry, asked for an explanation, and when

it was forthcoming, with the aid of the copy readers made a redistribution that was more judicious. Before the day was over, too, he sought an interview with the owner of the paper, and after explaining that a mistake had been made was, much to his relief, allowed to go back to his old place in the business office.

Customarily the city editor deals with the department men first. Summoning them one at a time, he tells them of any news that is expected to develop in their territory and gets them out of the office without delay. Then he turns to the general workers. These men have served apprenticeships in the ranks of the department workers and most of them are capable of reporting in a passable manner anything from a fire to a wedding, although each one has a specialty. To each reporter he sends out the city editor hands the clippings having to do with the story that is to be investigated, and frequently he points out features which he desires shall receive special attention. As the reporters are assigned the city editor writes their names on his schedule opposite the stories on which he details them, so that at any moment he can tell on what task each man is engaged, and to some extent how soon he may be expected to reappear. In an evening newspaper office three or four good men are retained to write stories sent in over the telephone or submitted by the newsgathering association. In a morning paper office two good men are held for emergencies and to write from the telephone; one, who, after having had an afternoon assignment, works in the office from 8 o'clock until midnight or a little after, is called the "short wait man"; the other, who does not report for duty until 6 o'clock and remains until 3 o'clock in the morning, is known as the "long wait man."

A reporter, when he returns from an assignment, immediately goes to the city editor and makes an oral report, explaining briefly but comprehensively what he has accomplished, whereupon the city editor, weighing the story and giving a thought to the pressure on the paper's columns, tells him how long he shall make his article, sometimes adding a few words relative to the points that are to be made prominent in it. In the language of the newspaper offices, "what the city editor says about a story goes." Asking for half a column he expects neither more nor less and he tolerates no presumption; the newsgatherers, are, however, expected to speak up if they think that their oral reports have not been clearly understood. If there is any departure from his instructions, the city editor is in a position to discover it quickly, for every article written by the reporters goes to him for its first inspection. In a morning paper office most of the articles are carried to the city editor's desk complete; in the office of an evening paper a great many of them reach him a page or two at a time, for where editions follow one another closely the stories must be hurried through to the composing room without delay. Not often does the city editor give an article written by a trustworthy reporter a careful reading. Commonly he only glances through it. But this reading means much to the reporter, for finding a weak introduction or several long, involved sentences, or discovering that instructions have been disobeyed, the editor hands the article back to be rewritten. The articles which come up to requirements he passes over to the copy readers to be edited, occasionally calling their attention to an error or an awkward sentence, but more often contenting himself with telling them how long the articles are to

be. In an evening paper office there are anywhere from three to seven local copy readers employed. They sit in the reporters' room, grouped around a large desk, and where many editions are printed the assistant city editor shares their desk with them and acts as a head copy reader. Usually the city editor of an evening paper has his desk in the reporters' room, close to the copy readers. On a morning paper there are often as many as a dozen local copy readers, and generally the city editor has a private office.

Wherever he sits, the city editor keeps close watch on the telephone on his desk, for through it he is kept in touch with all parts of the city. It yields him dozens of small prizes every hour, and he is never sure when its bell rings that it is not going to bestow on him a story which will far outshine anything in his experience. Knowing how the reporters at Police Headquarters and elsewhere watch for news, one can understand how the city editor looks upon his telephone. Each watcher, from a great mass of material, gleans a few gems. From the city editor's telephone come only gems, or at least, what to the watchers look like gems.

It might be thought that having got all of his reporters out of the office promptly, each one bent on an errand he was well qualified to perform, the city editor would feel relieved. If he does, it is to a very limited extent, for his real worries, he well knows, are to come. About the time that his last man has reached the street and has become lost in the crowd, the telephone bell rings and one of the watchers gives notice of a fire or an accident. No sooner has the city editor added the item to his schedule than he has to turn to listen to a question asked by a copy reader who is editing an article

handed in by a reporter who, late the day before, had been assigned to get an interview; the copy reader is perhaps a little dubious about the accuracy of the interview, and is willing to shift the responsibility for its appearance. The city editor sets him right and is about to pick up a letter just laid on his desk when the telephone rings again. This time one of the police-court reporters is on the wire with an important story about a burglary. One of the men kept in the office is directed to take the facts and "write them for all they are worth." Next comes word from the coroners' office that a well-known man has died suddenly, and the city editor, after adding this to his schedule, and glancing at the clock, calls another inside man and tells him to look in the "morgue" and see if he can find material enough for a quarter of a column obituary notice. The "morgue," it might be explained, is the office cabinet-repository for clippings. Usually it is under the care of the assistant city editor or one of the copy readers, and into it go all clippings that seem to be worth preserving. The contributions are filed in labeled envelopes arranged in lettered drawers, so that it takes only a few moments to find anything desired, provided, of course there is anything on hand. Frequently, when it becomes known that a prominent man is dangerously ill, his obituary is written and filed, and in a great many offices the lives of the President, the Pope, the King of England, and the Czar of Russia are kept "standing" in type.

Probably, while the city editor is wondering how he is going to cover the new items on his schedule, the telephone rings again and he hears of a murder, and this is perhaps followed by word of a street car collision in which several persons were hurt. With so

many calls waiting for attention, it is little wonder if the city editor becomes restless. Sometimes, deciding to take a chance, he telephones one of the watchers to leave his station long enough to get a story in his neighborhood, but only in a grave emergency will he send out the men held at the office to write news received over the telephone. Their absence throws additional burdens on the copy readers, who at best work under pressure, and no matter what news is calling he has no assurance that the next minute will not find him listening to far more insistent calls.

If his paper prints pictures, and the use of illustrations is growing, for it has been proved beyond a doubt that they are acceptable to readers, the city editor's cares are increased, for there dare be no delay in getting the photographers and artists into action. If there is an accident a reporter reaching the scene an hour, or for that matter, several hours later, can find plenty of persons ready to give him the information he desires; it makes no difference to him that the injured persons have been taken to the hospitals and that the wreckage has been cleared away. Not so with the photographer. His camera will record only what is before it, and a word painting is of no more service to him than would be a recitation of a multiplication table. Arriving too late the photographer might almost as well not arrive at all, for a picture of a quiet street, even bearing the explanation that the street has recently been the scene of an atrocious murder or a collision in which a dozen persons were hurt, is far from exciting; nor will a picture of a wide expanse of water attract much notice, although the text announce that under the water lies what remains of a wrecked steamboat. The pencil artists are not bound as are

the photographers, for they can make use of descriptions, and in emergencies call upon their imaginations, but with them, too, the best results are attained when they view the scene while it contains the things that make it worthy of attention. Where a paper makes a specialty of illustrations, the city editor searches every bit of intelligence that comes to him for pictorial possibilities, and confronted by big news, may assign his artists and photographers before he does his reporters. The highest-class picture-makers, the cartoonists, are accountable not to the city editor but to the managing editor. Commonly, they plan as well as execute their drawings, getting their ideas through extended and careful newspaper reading, but the managing editor's suggestions they have to accept as commands, and they have to submit all their work for his inspection. Usually they submit rough sketches to him first, and try again if he disapproves of their prospective pictures.

Every city editor is glad to get his men back into the office, but where an evening paper is published the city editor keeps a particularly close watch on the door. From the time a reporter reaches the office on his return from an assignment, not more than a minute elapses until he is at work at his desk, provided, of course, that he has gathered information worth publishing; and wishing to keep in the good graces of the man who directs the newsgatherers, he writes at good speed. But however fast a man is turning out copy he is not surprised if the city editor begs him to hurry. Half the time a reporter on an evening paper, writing a long article, is told before he is anywhere nearly through, that another story is waiting for him, and often he is informed what his next assignment will be before he has begun to write the story he has on

hand. The half hour that precedes the printing of an edition finds the city editor hurrying all the reporters in the office, and fervently wishing that those who are out on assignments would return, and it goes hard with the man who offends. The experienced workers would as soon think of jumping out of the window as they would of crossing the city editor at this time.

As fast as the reporters on an afternoon paper finish writing, they are dispatched on fresh assignments, and in the course of a day one man will often report a half-dozen stories. As the day advances news pours into the office more and more rapidly. The watchers send in reports at frequent intervals, and from those men who both watch and write there comes a steady stream of manuscript. Early in the morning almost any story is good enough to get a place in the paper. Late in the day routine news is discarded and the men engaged on stories which must be printed are instructed to "keep it down to the bone." The poorer stories of the morning, and most of those rewritten from the morning papers, are thrown out of the paper altogether when the flood comes, or are moved to the inside pages, the number of pages usually growing with the successive editions.

In a morning newspaper office the day city editor directs the reporters throughout the afternoon, but soon after 6 o'clock he makes way for the night city editor, whose work more closely resembles that of the city editor of an evening paper. The day city editor tells the reporters who return from assignments in the afternoon how long they are to make their articles, but he rarely edits any manuscript, contenting himself with laying the stories handed in aside for the attention of the copy readers who come on duty with the night city,

editor and work under his direction until the paper goes to press for the first edition. How long the morning paper reporters remain on duty depends upon the amount of news to be gathered. Under ordinary circumstances each man gets only two assignments, one in the afternoon and one in the evening, and commonly, half the reporters are through work by midnight. The night city editor leaves after the second edition has been made up, and with him go the reporters still in the office with the exception of the long wait man, who, with a copy reader, remains until the last edition comes from the presses.

The copy readers, who prepare for publication and write headings for the articles written by the reporters, are the unpopular men and the drudges of the newspaper business. The incompetent reporters talk about them behind their backs because they will not pass their poorly written stories; the crack reporters, especially those working at space rates, call them plodders and growl at them when they dare to exercise their right to prune, and the city editor censures them for not rejecting more stories, allowing errors to get past them, and not making the space writers keep more closely to the facts. A copy reader, who must be able to decipher any writing, is expected to cut out unnecessary words and hackneyed expressions, catch all errors of fact, omissions, and contradictions, cut to size desired by the city editor, correct poor English and spelling, arrange stories so that the facts follow one another in their logical order, punctuate, rewrite weak introductions, and embellish generally. In brief, he is required to turn whatever comes to him into a smooth-reading story, although it may be the initial effort of a novice; and he is called to account when-

ever he allows even a minute error to get into the paper. It is easy enough for a copy reader to keep a reporter from telling a paper's readers in the end of a long article that a woman was rescued by the firemen from the fifth floor of a building described at the beginning as only four stories high, but almost every day, try as he will, he allows something to escape his vigilance, and in some offices the copy readers accept their daily reprimands as a matter of course. In these establishments there are so many words and expressions that are forbidden that it keeps a copy reader awake at nights trying to remember them; and it is a clever writer who can put on paper, without offending, what he has to say. It may here be remarked that when some purist writes a letter to an editor to call attention to a "split infinitive" or to make fun of an awkward expression, he wounds a copy reader, and a copy reader only.

A large proportion of the articles that are edited by a copy reader on an evening paper reach him page by page, and frequently a man finds himself engaged on three or four stories at one time. He may get a page of one dealing with a fire, then a page of another telling about a murder, perhaps two that are part of an account of a political meeting, and after another page of the fire story, three or four more that close the report of a wedding. The worker who cannot at one time handle three stories which reach him page by page, and send the headings after them, is out of place in an evening newspaper establishment and is not tolerated. While a copy reader is reading stories piecemeal he requires the reporters to place "catch lines" as well as numbers on their pages, whereupon they come to him "3 Fire," "7 Wedding," "4 Political," and so on.

Sending a heading to the composing room after a story instead of with the first page a copy reader marks it "1-2 Fire," or "1-2 Wedding," and the composing-room foreman or one of his assistants sees that it is rightly placed. On articles which, while brief, are of more than ordinary news value, bulletins of accidents for example, the copy readers place marks which instruct the printers to "double lead," that is, by inserting leads widen the spaces between the lines of type. Articles thus treated appearing in the paper always catch the eye; at first glance they look as if they were printed in larger type than are the other stories.

While they are held to strict account for errors and poor writing that get past them, the copy readers are censured if they hold articles, no matter how poorly constructed or how full of errors they are, for a much longer time than would be required to read them were they perfect; the supposition apparently is that if the copy readers are capable, and pay strict attention to their work, they can effect miraculous transformations by a few sweeps of their pencils. At any rate every city editor adheres to the principle that anyone can find fault and rewrite, and that a "desk man," to be worth keeping, must be able to reconstruct without rewriting. The result is that a copy reader encountering an especially poorly written article, unless he thinks the news important, asks leave to throw it into the wastebasket. The city editor, should he be doubtful, takes the article again and examines it more carefully than he did at first. Then, not able to suggest treatment which will fit it for publication, he throws it away himself or has it rewritten by the reporter who wrote it originally, or if he is out of reach, by some other reporter.

Advance copies of speeches are sent to the printers as quickly as they are edited, but the copy readers insure against their getting into the paper ahead of time by marking them "Wait Orders." Turned into type, speeches thus labeled are set aside in the composing room until the city editor releases them, after having been informed that their delivery has been begun. Coming to the office by telegraph the message giving permission for the printing usually reads, "Release Blank's speech." And here a few words may be devoted to an explanation of what newspaper men call the "bulletin." If out of the city on an assignment a reporter, after having written and filed in the telegraph office a long story (and in cases of this kind the story is sent into the newspaper office direct over a wire "made" for the occasion), comes into possession of intelligence which it is desirable should be communicated to his paper without delay, he embodies the information in a brief message, and heading it "Bulletin," has the operator sandwich it in between two sentences of the main story. These bulletins, which are preceded by a word of warning, the receiving operator writes on slips of paper that are instantly carried to the editor for whom they are intended. Bulletins are employed to particular advantage during court trials, when into the main running story the reporter interjects guides for the editor, such as: "Summing up for prosecution nearly over," information gained by the reporter through seeing the lawyer lay down the last page of his notes and take off his spectacles; and "Get ready for verdict; jury is coming in."

Another device is the "flash," employed to convey information for the receipt of which the editors are holding the paper from the press. Particularly is it

useful when a prizefight is being reported. Before the fight has made much progress the sending operator begins to lag behind, and it may easily be that while the eighth round is in progress he is still working on the sixth or seventh. Should one of the fighters now be "knocked out," the operator waiting only long enough to give the warning word "Flash" sends from dictation the bulletin announcing the winner. Knowing who won the contest the paper can put an "extra" on the press, and leave for a later edition a description of the rounds between the point where the flash was inserted and the end of the fight.

The ability to write good headings is one of a copy reader's most valuable accomplishments. In fact, a man who is unable to write ones that are more than fair cannot hold a place at the desk of a big paper, even if he can correct manuscript in a satisfactory manner; at least a third of the reporters who are made copy readers are sent back to their old places because their work in this line does not come up to the mark. The editors hold that anyone who has a fair education can learn how to cut out errors and embellish with a little practice, and that were it not for the headings, they could employ school-teachers to perform a large part of the work inside the office. In all the large cities the demand for first-class heading writers keeps constantly a little ahead of the supply.

The heading of an article is intended to call attention to it and to set forth its most prominent features, and the writer must say a great deal in a few words; the more information he can crowd in the better. And here is where the rub comes: "The column rules," in the language of the printers, "cannot be bent," and the heading must accommodate itself to space. Half the

time the heading that a copy reader would like to use has to be discarded because it is too long. Always there are certain forms which have to be followed, and on papers which do not favor bill-poster type and "scares," the usual limit for the first part of the largest heading printed is twenty letters, a space counting the same as a letter, a circumstance which accounts in part for such familiar lines as "Killed Wife and Self," "Panic in Tenement," "Murder and Suicide," and "Ferryboats in Crash." Humorous headings are in high favor in many offices, and there are few managing editors who will not commend the writer of one that is especially clever. To learn how to write headings one should study the yellow journals, as they gather in most of the past masters in the art. To learn what to avoid one might with profit turn to the files of some New York paper for the years immediately preceding the War of the Rebellion, where he will find column-long stories labeled by such ambiguous announcements as "Very Important," "Latest from Europe," and "Very Latest."

A city editor who finds that he has printed a piece of important news which escaped the other papers says, as has been explained, that he has scored a beat or a scoop on them, and rejoices. But there is less likelihood always of his beating his rivals than there is of one of them beating him. His successes are not measured against those of one other city editor, but against those of all the others put together, and therefore with all the papers equally well equipped for getting the news the odds against him are as the number of papers is to one.

But regardless of the odds against him no city editor, at least none employed on a big paper, is content to remain on the defensive and aim only to pro-

tect himself against defeat; he would not, even were it possible, engage only in drawn battles. Instead he strives in every possible way to eclipse his rivals, and never holds back for fear of retaliation. But beats in these times are not to be picked up every week, no matter how hard they are sought. The police system of newsgathering lays bare to every paper a good part of the town's activities; the custom of paying volunteer reporters removes the ban of comparative secrecy from many others; the growing extension of the telephone system makes it easy for a man to call up his favorite paper when something out of the way claims the attention of his neighborhood, and the neighborhoods in which every paper does not have admirers are few; and last but not least the local newsgathering association is to be reckoned with, for every piece of news that reaches any of its large force of reporters is distributed broadcast. In New York a monumental exclusive beat is not scored once in twelve months. But in the same length of time any one paper may be badly beaten repeatedly; for it may miss news that only one of its rivals got, that several of them got, or that all of them got.

Because beats are so hard to land the city editor tries to triumph by enhancing the quality of his news. Each story that comes to him he examines carefully in hopes that he will find in it some detail which, exploited in a certain way, will enable him to accomplish unexpected execution, or in other words, considering each story as a weapon that has been distributed impartially, he endeavors to win a victory through skill in handling. And to be fitted to conduct an aggressive fight a city editor should possess an enormous fund of general information; should be well up on current topics and

local history; should know his city thoroughly, the location of all public institutions, churches, hotels, and theaters, the homes and favorite clubs of men who are often in demand, and the whereabouts of a good share of the dives and gambling houses; and, perhaps more important, should know a great deal about the leading men and politicians of the city, their likes and dislikes, their reputations for veracity and the manner in which they can best be approached, their social stations, their business interests and business standings, their favorite recreations, their families and their relatives, and, if possible, their secret habits and their states of mind—happy or discontented.

Knowing all these things a city editor makes the experienced newsgatherers proud of him, and convinces the novices that he is more than human. When word is received that the firemen have been summoned to Amsterdam Avenue and 104th Street, he puts the reporter he sends out on the story on his mettle by saying, "Now hurry along, for there are on that corner a home for aged women, a schoolhouse, and a home for the blind;" learning that there has been a highway robber captured at Third Avenue and Fifteenth Street he keeps the reporter from going astray by telling him to go to the East Twenty-Second Street station house; if Stephen Stevenson drops dead he gives the reporter a hint by saying, "His wife is a daughter of Jacob Manton, and his son, who is a lawyer, has an office in the Bowling Green Building;" if he hears that James Vanbest is to be married, he mentions to the reporter told to investigate the story that Vanbest, who can usually be found at the Complex Club, was ten years ago sued for breach of promise by Lily Pansy, a chorus girl; when a reporter comes in with

the information that there has been a murder in the "White Horse" tavern he remembers that three other murders were, years ago, committed in the place, and says that data necessary for an unusual story can be found in the office morgue; sending a reporter to see Dr. James John, he remarks: "Be careful, he's tricky," and assigning another to see a prominent lawyer, he says: "Go in on your hands and knees. He thinks he is the most important man in town;" if Dotty Footlights, hurt in a runaway accident in the park, refuses to give the name of the man, who, riding, with her, had his leg broken, but was carried off by a friend, he tells the reporter sent to investigate that he had better find out whether old Palace, the bachelor-banker, is not keeping indoors; and if the ship-news reporter, writing about a liner's departure, puts Mrs. J. Vanantwerp Jones among the "also sailed," he calls him to his desk and asks whether her husband was at the pier to bid her good-bye. "You know," the city editor says, "they are not very congenial, and this may mean a more than temporary separation."

The city editor's particular dread is a libel suit. Twenty defeats are preferable to one suit for heavy damages decided against his paper. And less frequently than might be thought do libel suits come as a result of mistakes made by the newsgatherers. Many times the city editor and the copy readers are at fault, for, in editing an article, they may, by cutting out, or putting in, or transposing a sentence, or even a word, change its entire meaning. Particularly in writing headings is a copy reader liable to error. After patching up an involved or poorly written story which says that Jones was arrested on complaint of Smith, a man not infrequently writes a heading which says that

Smith was the person arrested; and reading a story page by page, sending each one to the printers as soon as he has gone over it, a copy reader who allows his wits to wander can very easily get streets and street numbers mixed. If a copy reader does write a heading saying that the police made a raid on a house of ill repute at a certain number in Forty-fifth Street, whereas the story says the house was in Fifty-fourth Street, a libel suit is almost sure to come if the error is not detected before it gets into the paper.

Headings often give rise to libel suits because, in them, owing to a lack of space, there is small chance to use qualifying words. A reporter compelled to write a story which he fears will cause trouble selects his words with care, and avoids making direct statements. He manages to make his meaning clear by insinuation, and he writes around rather than at the object of his attack; sometimes he writes a whole column without making an accusation, and then at the end tacks on a seemingly irrelevant paragraph which, in the light of what precedes it, gives a new turn to the whole story. For example, a long article telling about the reported disappearance from home of Mrs. Brown may be brought to a close with the plain assertion that Mr. Black, who lives near the Brown home, has not been seen for several days. By insinuation the story says that Mrs. Brown and Mr. Black have gone away together. The heading for a story of this type is required to say enough to attract attention, but is supposed to do it so skillfully that neither Mrs. Brown nor Mr. Black can make it the basis of a libel suit, even should it develop that neither was away from home, and more than this, that they were not even acquainted. The copy reader who attempts a feat of

this kind, as might be expected, is not invariably successful.

Every day, perhaps at his own home, the city editor goes over all the local stories printed in his paper to see how his instructions have been obeyed, and after this, compares the stories with those appearing in the rival publications. Memorandum is made of every shortcoming, and later the reporters find in their mail boxes little notes, sometimes exceedingly sarcastic, which set them to thinking. Usually the city editor engages the reporters, and in any event he has the power to dismiss those who do not come up to his requirements. Of beginners who show that they are entirely unfitted for newspaper work he quickly disposes, and he is ever ready to warn the experienced men who give evidence that they are growing careless or losing their enthusiasm, and to dismiss them if there is not an immediate change for the better. And however much he likes a reporter personally he cannot be lenient, for defeats operate not only against his peace of mind but against his existence as an editor as well.

Every moment that he can spare from his other duties while he is in the office the city editor spends in going over the rival papers in search of material for fresh stories. If he sees a dispatch that a bank has failed in a nearby city he promptly telephones to the financial editor, asking him whether any local bank is hurt; noticing that suicides are unusually plentiful, he details a reporter to go up to the Board of Health offices and get a column story on the prevalence of self-murder, and the probable cause of it; a great drop in the selling price of any corporation's securities leads him to dispatch a reporter to demand an explanation of the corporation's president. "Ask him if the rumor

that the concern is in a bad way is true," he calls after the departing newsgatherer. Coming across a formal death notice which begins "Suddenly," he starts a novice out to ascertain something about the death; a report of an epidemic in some foreign seaport causes him to detail a man to see the local quarantine officers and ask them what precautions they are taking to guard against the introduction of the disease into this country; and learning that a notorious criminal is to be released from prison, he arranges to have a man at the prison gate to ask him how it feels to be free again, and what he expects to do in the future. So his work goes on all day long.

Most of the time the city editor leaves to the sporting editor the work of looking after the sporting events, but on the occasion of a prizefight, a big football game, or something of a similar nature, he summons the sporting editor and asks him how he intends to "cover" the event. Often he makes suggestions, and he may intimate that he would be willing to assign one or two of his own best men to relieve the sporting editor's reporters of the descriptive writing. Together they decide on the space that is to be given the story, and, this settled, make arrangements to get the news into the office promptly. The chess editor, the labor editor, and all the other special editors are also called upon to consult with the city editor when the news in their departments assumes unusual worth, and the good stories they "land" are never allowed to be buried in an inside page under a department heading.

It is when a big story "breaks loose," when there is a bad railroad or steamboat accident, when a theater or a hotel catches fire, when a crowded building collapses, when a panic sweeps over the financial district, when

a great man dies suddenly, when something occurs, in short, which calls for a concentration of public thought far and near that the city editor is hardest tried. On an occasion of this kind he receives assistance from the managing editor, but he must do almost all of the detailed planning, and moreover, suggestions from the managing editor, in a sense, add to his responsibilities for, regardless of the manner in which he executes his own ideas, he is required to have all orders transmitted from above (and suggestions are only polite orders) carried out in the best manner possible. Failing in any particular he is sure to hear about it, even if he handle the story as a whole in a satisfactory manner.

His first task, and it is no light one, a story springing on him suddenly, is to find men to cover it, and this means that he must decide in a few moments which stories on which reporters are already engaged can, with the greatest safety, be abandoned; and devise means for reaching the reporters. To pave the way for quick action in just such emergencies, the city editors of most evening papers require their reporters to communicate with the office over the telephone every hour, and, of course, with a staff of twenty or thirty men, the intervals between calls are short. Where this custom is not observed the reporters are reached by telephone and messenger, usually after nerve-wracking delays, although every reporter calls his office as soon as he learns of an extraordinary occurrence, and offers his services. The general practice of city editors is to over-man a big story rather than under-man it, for on these occasions a paper, too, is put to an especially severe test. Ordinarily a man buys a single paper, the same one day after day, reads it and con-

siders that he has acquired all the news. But learning of a catastrophe or some other momentous event he buys three or four papers and reads the big story in each one. Then if his favorite journal suffers through the comparison he never stops to see whether it more than holds its own in the lesser news, but condemns it through and through. Presenting a poor account of a big piece of news a paper may easily lose hundreds of readers.

Having got in touch with his reporters and learned the extent of the news (for the first duty of the early arrivals at the scene of a big piece of news is to call their office and describe the situation), the city editor begins to apportion the story. To one man he gives the task of procuring material for a general description which shall open the paper's account; to another, if a fire is demanding attention, is intrusted the work of ascertaining the source of the flames; another is told to get a list of the dead; a man is sent to each hospital to which rescued persons are taken, to get their names, and if possible, stories of their experiences; and others are detailed to look after the money loss, the insurance, the rescues, and the persons reported missing. At brief intervals the city editor gets fresh information from his scouts, for they tell him immediately of all new developments, and before the day is over he may have every man on his staff giving all or part of his attention, for the watchers in emergencies are frequently instructed to make quick dashes to hospitals or other places, to the big news of the day.

After he has made provision for covering the main features of the story the city editor buckles down and tries to find the central point of the whole thing, searches for the detail that, exploited in the right man-

ner, will place his story above that of the other papers. Perhaps the feature lies in the causes leading to the fire, carelessness, poor construction, incompetent employees, or incendiarism; perhaps it lies in the work of the firemen; perhaps it is decided that the flames would have been drowned at the start had it not been for the poor water supply. Whatever decision is made, and the managing editor gets a vote here, it is communicated to the reporters who are at work on parts of the story that may be affected, and later, when the news is going down on paper, general instructions are issued, so that everything is made to move toward the one end.

Before leaving the city editor, it is worth while calling attention to the fact that news is under many circumstances valued in direct proportion to the difficulties which must be overcome to procure it, and that what comes too easily is frequently not valued at all. To illustrate: if two neighbors, neither of any particular prominence in the community, after having a disagreement come to blows, but afterward in their sober senses agree to keep quiet about the affair, a city editor, getting an inkling of it and failing to get a word from either participant, will work with might and main to get all the details, and later publish them with a great hurrah. In effect, he labors with the idea of showing that he cannot be put off or defeated; and the other city editors, reading his story, and subsequently failing to make progress with either participant, will do their best to start the fight anew. But if, after having a disagreement and coming to blows, two neighbors both post off to a newspaper office to air their grievances, the city editor, blowing hot for a moment, soon blows cold. "Ahem," he says, and "Aha." Then he picks

out a young reporter to take the story, and returning to his desk starts up his pipe. The tobacco all gone, likewise the two belligerents, he strolls over to where the young reporter is at work, picks up a sheet or two of his copy, reads it over slowly, nods his head, and says: "I don't believe, Mr. Blank, that I'd make much of that story. In fact I think about a stick will do. We're not here to mix in neighbors' squabbles." If the story ever gets into the paper at all, which is doubtful, the other city editors size it up for just what it is, and no more is heard of the affair, or at least nothing more is printed about it.

Continually afraid that someone who has an ax to grind will deceive him and make him turn the stone, the city editor occasionally kills a story which, while it has all the ear-marks of being what it purports to be, comes in the category of what is to be handled with care. Thus, when someone appears in the office with a story of a runaway in the park, in which a woman is hurt, the city editor is all attention until he learns that the injured person is a small-part actress or a chorus girl. Then he smiles knowingly and waves the newsbearer off. "Not to-day," he says. If someone comes to him with a story of an actress losing her diamonds, he may lose his temper and ask the writer whether he had not better turn his attention to the gold-brick industry; and when word is received that two actors have engaged in fisticuffs, he either decides to let the story severely alone or details a clever man to write an article which shall make them both ridiculous. Of inventors he is always shy, and he wastes few words with promoters and self-acclaimed celebrities.

Afraid as he is of news that is offered to him free of cost or labor, the city editor is still more afraid of

anything which is handed to him accompanied by the information that the giver is willing to pay to have it get into print. Every city editor is a stickler on this score, and the usual procedure is to order the would-be benefactor out of the office in words that are more expressive than elegant. Not understanding how offers of payment are regarded by city editors, a man who has news that he would like to have printed occasionally puts himself entirely outside the pale, not only for the time but forever, or until the incident is forgotten, whereas giving the news without comment when called upon by a reporter he would be considered a friend.

## CHAPTER X

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR JOURNALISM

WHEN any editor except the city editor drops out of a newspaper office temporarily, there is a slight shifting about and a closing of the ranks, and the paper reaches the street on schedule time, without more than a third of those in the office being any the wiser. But let one of the star reporters who has been at work on a murder mystery which is claiming the town's attention fail to put in an appearance at the time he is expected; let the political reporter absent himself on the day that the Governor comes to town; or let the prize race-track man send word that he is ill on the day that a big race is to be run, and instantly the whole establishment is affected. The managing editor and the city editor put their heads together and talk it over; the assistant managing editor and the assistant city editor begin to review the capacities of the different reporters with special interest; the copy readers, although they are only onlookers, view the situation if not with alarm at least with uneasiness and tell themselves that now is the time to do careful work and avoid mistakes; and half of the remaining newsgatherers wonder whether the chance for which they have been looking is at hand. Somehow, always the gap is filled, but unless the occasion marks the birth of a new star, or some worker, already a star in his own field, demonstrates that he is equal to things not hitherto suspected,

the stop-gap invariably leaves something to be desired. The editors count themselves lucky if they get through the day without a serious defeat, and, even winning a victory, wonder whether they would not have done better had they had the services of the missing man.

First-class reporters are scarce. There is a multitude of poor ones and an overabundance of fair ones, but the supply of those who are undoubtedly among the best is never up to the demand. The paper which does get a half-dozen first-class men on its staff is well able to take care of itself, and is sure to give concern to its competitors; most papers have only two or three, and a great many have none. In a few large offices the editors try to manufacture their stars from the raw material; but despite the fact that they select their candidates with care, picking each man from perhaps two score of applicants, they attain very few successes; not enough, one who did not know how scarce good reporters were would say, to pay them for their trouble. There is one New York paper, one that is particularly well known, which every year from a host of applicants for situations selects about a score of young men, most of them college graduates, and gives each one a chance to show what he can do. Every effort is made to develop those who show promise. Yet, if from the total number employed the editors get one good man, they congratulate themselves. Many, many years they are compelled to make a clean sweep of the newcomers, not one coming up to requirements.

There is undoubtedly a great deal of truth in the saying that good reporters are born and not made. A man may learn how to gather some kinds of news, and he may learn how to write correctly, but if he can-

not see the picturesque or vital point of an incident and express what he sees so that others will see as through his eyes, his productions, even if no particular fault can be found with them, will not bear the mark of true excellence; and there is, if one stops to think, a great difference between something that is devoid of faults and something that is full of good points. The quality which makes a good newspaper man must, in the opinion of many editors, exist in the beginning. But when it does exist, it can usually be developed, no matter how many obstacles are in the way.

The primary qualification for a good reporter, and this means any worker who handles news, for editors are only promoted reporters, coming down to basic principles, is the ability to *see* news when it exists, and to differentiate any piece of news and pick out the features in it which are most worthy of attention or exploitation. Ability to determine the crux of a story does not, however, of itself guarantee that a man will make a finished reporter, for with reporters as with painters and musicians, conception and intuition amount to little unless they are properly set forward in action. Were it otherwise real artists and good newspaper men would be far more plentiful. The man who can analyze news and pick out the picturesque or vital point of a story is competent to this extent, but he will not be accepted as a good reporter until he proves that he can carry out his ideas from beginning to end. The qualifications for a good reporter, therefore, are the ability to determine what information is wanted; to procure this information; and last to put this information on paper in a pleasing manner. Ability to collect information calls for alertness, resourcefulness, enthusiasm, love of hard work, a good memory,

good health, and ambition. Ability to write entertainingly calls for natural aptitude, coupled with either education or extraordinary powers of observation. It is no wonder that reporters of the first grade are scarce. Lacking one qualification here cited, a man is barred, even if he can see the news where others cannot.

The more natural endowments and the more acquirements the young newspaper worker has the better it is for him, but if he is to succeed he absolutely must possess unbounded enthusiasm and good health. He may lack both and still make a brilliant spurt, but it is a foregone conclusion that the absence of either will bar him from the big prizes. The enthusiasm, too, must be proof against tarnish, else it will suffer when, early in his career, he is sent to ask some woman whether it is true that her husband has run off with a concert hall singer, or to perform some other task equally disagreeable. Beginners usually get more than their share of the undesirable assignments, and more than one young man, who since boyhood has looked forward to the delights of journalism, has, because of this, begun to have misgivings before the expiration of his first week's work. The novice, moreover, is subject to many discouragements, for there is no coddling in a newspaper office. The inexperienced man is sent on errands that do not promise much, but it is expected that, having little asked of him, he will do that little as well as it could be done by anyone else. Not infrequently, because he is subjected to a steady stream of criticism and because he gets so many unpleasant tasks, a beginner comes to think himself ill-treated. What he overlooks is that his editor is treating him with kindness in allowing him to make an

attempt to perform certain work, and thus hold a place which a lot of other men, who could undoubtedly perform the work required, are extremely anxious to get. Beginners are only tolerated. There is no crying demand for their services.

Bad habits, contrary to a rather widespread belief, are looked upon in most newspaper offices just as they are elsewhere. Now and then an editor is discovered who says that he does not care how those who work for him live so long as they perform their duties in a satisfactory manner; but there is none who is not quick to protest the moment a man's habits interfere with his efficiency, or with the peace of the establishment. The reporter who fails to pay his debts is safe only while his creditors stay away from his office, and the one who keeps bad company can do so with impunity only while he does good work and while his undesirable acquaintances let him alone during business hours. No newspaper worker is expected to have many visitors call to see him at the office, and editors object so strongly to having the telephones used for other than office business that they will not keep a reporter whose friends insist on calling him over the wire.

The frowsy-haired, picturesquely clad, irresponsible journalists one reads about in novels, and sees on the stage, exist now only in imagination. There are no brilliant geniuses, who, drunk or sober, need only announce themselves at the door of a newspaper office to be invited in and made much of, in the hope that they will deign to dash off a masterpiece, and there are no erratic prodigies for whose favor editors bow and scrape. In place of the unstable wonders, the papers employ steady hard workers, respectably dressed, who

appear ready for work every day. The only Bohemians of modern journalism are young men who have not yet got their bearings, and hangers-on, and failures. To call an experienced newspaper man a Bohemian is to insult him.

## CHAPTER XI

### HOW THE REPORTERS WORK

Most beginners in journalism get a shock when they receive their first assignment. Almost every man of them imagines before he enters the service of a newspaper that on his initiation day he will be taken aside and put in possession of a lot of secrets; that going into the office with no knowledge of newsgathering, he will, a few hours later, emerge a self-reliant reporter. The shock comes when he learns that there are no secrets to set him right, and no magic words imparted to help him unlock mysteries. He comes out of the office as he went in, only coming out he is on an errand.

The initiation of a reporter is very matter of fact. Reaching the office on his first day the beginner, making himself known, is directed to take a seat in some corner, and usually the scene harks him back to his schooldays, for the big room is filled with desks ranged in rows, and up at the front sits the city editor for all the world like a teacher. Soon the room begins to fill with young men, who, by nodding to one another, prove that they are no strangers to the place, but from none of them does he get more than a glance. Some begin to read newspapers, others devote themselves to cutting out clippings which they paste in long strings, while a few gather in the back of the

room and engage in a low-voiced conversation. Then one by one they are summoned to the city editor's desk, and after listening to him for a minute, bustle out of the door.

Long after the time the newcomer has decided that he has been forgotten, an office boy tells him that the city editor wishes to speak to him, and he hurries forward. "Good-morning," says the city editor, "you are the new reporter, are you not?" Then the newcomer is asked to give his name and the city editor pronounces it after him. If it is an unusual name he spells it, and asks, "Is that right?" This formality over the city editor is once more on very familiar ground. "Well, Mr. Blank," he says; "a woman has tried to kill herself at Avenue A and Houston Street. Kindly look into the matter." Or he sends him on some other errand of less moment. The new recruit a minute later is in the street, at last a journalist. Experienced workers rarely call themselves journalists; "reporters," "newspaper workers," or "newspaper men" they say; the beginners are usually "journalists," or "engaged in journalism."

The new reporter, whatever he calls himself, arriving at Avenue A and Houston Street, supposing he has been sent there to inquire about a woman's attempt at suicide, quickly realizes that he is dependent upon his own resources. He has not been told just what he is expected to get, nor how to prosecute his search. Instead of a dignified journalist such as he had fancied, he finds himself a bewildered young man begging information from small shopkeepers, tenement-house janitors, corner loafers, and newsboys. And these individuals, he learns, have no notions about the "courtesies due the press" of which he has heard. They

look on him with suspicion, give him short answers or none at all, and let him understand that he is meddlesome. Prosecuting his inquiries in a saloon he need not be astonished if the bartender and the half-drunken idlers jeer at him. Newsgathering, he before long decides, is hard work and not a pleasant pastime; and he probably returns to his office with some of his pre-conceived ideas of journalism gone forever. Another surprise awaits him if his gleanings are pronounced incomplete by the city editor, for then he is sent back in a hurry to get what he missed.

There are two principal reasons why the novice is from the beginning allowed to plan as well as fight his battles. First, the city editor cannot take the time necessary to advise him, and second, the detailed planning must be done on the scene of action, or at least after the news seeker has ascertained what confronts him. Giving a reporter an assignment such as has just been described the city editor, however much he wished to help, could do little more than say to him: "When in doubt ask a policeman;" and an experienced reporter could, had he no more time than the city editor, add little else than "Look for another reporter." But even these scraps would be worth a great deal to the beginner.

The police and the experienced reporters are the most valuable aids the new reporter can call to for assistance, and when he does call he is rarely repulsed. The particular policeman for whom the baffled newsgatherer should look, is the one whose beat or post includes the scene of the incident. It is, as has already been explained, the policeman's duty to investigate a great many of the events taking place in the territory he guards, and the average policeman manages to keep

himself well informed concerning almost everything that causes talk along his beat, whether it be something which demands his official attention or only a wedding, the birth of twins, the death of the shoemaker's dog, or the fact that the tinsmith came home drunk the night before. Encountering the policeman the reporter often gets a good part of the intelligence he desires without delay. But occasionally the reporter's meager information is news to the representative of the law, in which case, should the occurrence come within the scope of what he is required to investigate, the policeman, for his own protection, starts a search, and the reporter need only trail along behind to get his information. Even when the occurrence which the reporter is looking into is one that does not call for the policeman's attention, the reporter can often with success apply to him for a little assistance. Doors that are slammed in the reporter's face usually open wide for the representative of the law, for few persons have the hardihood to tell a policeman to go about his business, no matter how far he exceeds his authority.

Failing to find the policeman he seeks, or finding him, but getting little or nothing, the reporter can, where the event he is investigating calls for police inquiry, apply at the nearest station house with a fair prospect that he will reap some reward. The sergeant, already possessing the information desired, will, except in case of a robbery or something which the police wish to keep secret, hand it over on request, and not having it, he will detail a detective or a uniformed policeman to make an investigation. There are assignments having to do with fires, accidents, robberies, and similar events which a reporter can cover without calling on the police, but the circumspect news-

gatherer who believes that no effort is wasted insures himself to some extent against defeat by calling, before he starts for his office, at the station house of the precinct in which he is working, whenever his story is one that may possibly have interested them. A great many reporters always visit the station house first of all, which saves them from starting their own inquiry empty-handed, and permits them to get down to details without delay.

In most large cities, particularly in New York, the experienced reporters are always glad to help a beginner who is not presumptuous and does not attempt to sail under false colors. Because of this, the tyro who falls into difficulty on one of his early assignments is in luck if he meets a skillful newsgatherer whose quest is the same as his own. He is only benefited temporarily if the experienced man, having been at work on the story, turns over to him all the information he needs, and in one way he is harmed, for the experience may start him on the road to becoming a dependent ; but he is favored by fortune if he meets the tried newsgatherer when both are fresh on the scene. Of course, if the beginner were accountable to a school-teacher instead of a city editor, he might with profit to himself proceed on a plan of his own and reject proffered aid, but, as it is, he cannot afford to let anything pass that will add to his efficiency. A city editor concerns himself with the news and not with the reporter's training, and the quicker the novice ceases to be a stumbler the better is the editor pleased. The new reporter, therefore, who gets a chance to profit by another man's experience, should take advantage of the opportunity by all means. If, having learned the other man's methods, he can improve on them, there

is nothing to hinder him from so doing. He must understand, though, that the man who spends his time trying to evolve new methods while his opponents, employing the best they have, however faulty, are getting the news which he is not, rarely lasts long enough to put his theories into practice. Doubtful experiments the new reporter had better try when his time is his own, or at least, when he is after a story for which the city editor is not waiting.

It is when the beginner is sent out to find someone, un supplied with either a name or a definite address, that he most needs assistance. Hopelessly at sea, he must admire the manner in which the experienced reporter interviews in quick succession policemen, postmen, janitors, grocerymen, keepers of newsstands who deliver papers to regular customers, druggists, watchmen, laundrymen, and any other persons who might be expected to have a large neighborhood acquaintance. When a reporter has the name of the person he wishes to see or inquire about, but only an indefinite address, such as a certain section of the city or a certain street, a canvass of the laundrymen alone will often put him on the right track.

The pursuit of small accidents, trivial fires, and other unimportant happenings, the breaking-in work of every reporter, is interesting for a while, but most men after six months of it are found doing their best to prove themselves equal to more exacting tasks. In some offices the new reporters are, as soon as they have got their bearings, set to "covering police stations," and from this graduated into service in police courts, where they may be allowed to remain for two or three years. Police court reporting is hard work, not uniformly pleasant, but it provides a training that is ex-

tremely valuable. There are editors who hold that no man can reach his highest efficiency who has not had a year's trial at it, and most reporters who have had the experience are glad of it, no matter how they felt while the court was the scene of their daily labor. Not detailed to a police court, the reporter no longer a real novice is assigned to perform some other department work, such as looking after the reports made to the coroners' office or collecting the news disclosed at the headquarters of several divisions of the city government.

In offices where there is no department work the new reporters are sent upon more important assignments as they develop, until by degrees they come to be classed with the time-tried general workers. Where the department system is in force the new men are graduated into the general workers' ranks when it is thought that they have served a sufficient apprenticeship, or as a reward for an especially good piece of reporting. Not all departments, however, are looked upon as training schools for beginners. Some of them require the services of reporters both experienced and specially trained, and it is nothing unusual for a man to be drafted into one of these places and kept there indefinitely. The department men who cover the responsible posts are really specialists, and between a specialist and a department watcher there is a great gap.

The seasoned reporters are the men who get the constant change and excitement which, in the minds of most persons, are the lot of every newspaper worker. They interview statesmen, politicians, lawyers, preachers, pugilists, and any others who may chance to come into the public eye; match their wits against those of

the police when mysteries are to be solved; report court trials of interest; hasten to the scenes of disasters, be they far or near; collect the news of fires, failures, panics, parades, shipwrecks, yacht races, public meetings, prizefights, weddings, and deaths, and occasionally get the chance to go out as war correspondents. A general worker thinks nothing of reporting a murder, a wedding, and a missionary meeting in the afternoon and spending half the night in the street in front of the house where a widely known man is lying close to death; and he is not dismayed when without previous notice he is hurried off to some place half a hundred miles away, to report a train wreck or to look into the causes of an epidemic. He takes everything as a matter of course, and, thoroughly competent, never loses his head. Every time he leaves the office he hopes to encounter a "big" story, and when he does find himself face to face with a great disaster or some other occurrence that offers news almost without end, he thinks not of the difficulty he will have in getting a story, but of the opportunity offered to get a good one. The more news there is to gather the less need there will be to waste time looking for details, he tells himself, as he starts in to seek out the main facts. Some of the reporters who were sent to Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in 1889, when that city was destroyed by a flood, and over four thousand persons were killed, began to write their stories when they had been on the scene only a half hour. The bodies scattered everywhere gave them an idea of the great loss of life; the piles of débris and wrecked buildings bore testimony to the pecuniary damage, and every survivor was able to tell whence came the flood. Had the reporters waited to count the dead and ascertain the money loss accurately before

starting to write, their papers would not have heard from them for weeks.

Whether a man becomes a police reporter, a gatherer of financial news, a political writer, a specialist in some other line, or an all-around worker not decidedly developed in any one direction depends, in most instances, upon chance. The only way in which a novice can himself settle the character of his assignments is for him to bring with him into the office some special training. Finding that he has a lawyer on his staff, the city editor turns the legal training to account by giving the man court trials to report; the physician gets work among the hospitals or in the slums, and in times of an epidemic shines probably brighter than any other newsgatherer; the recruit from a bank or broker's office gets financial work. The individual who is specially fitted for no one place the editor pushes into the vacancy that most needs filling, no matter what the niche is. Coming into an office to-day a new reporter may be detailed to a police court. Had he been engaged yesterday he might have got a better assignment now covered, that of meeting incoming steamships.

Chance having determined the character of a man's assignments custom helps to keep him in his place, for the city editor, ever striving to get a man's best, never details his workers haphazard. Telling a man to look after a murder mystery one day and getting satisfactory results from him, he takes it for granted next day that the man knows more about the murder than does any of the other reporters, and details him on the same assignment. This he keeps up, the man doing his work well, until the story ceases to be of news value, or until it reaches the stage where it can be covered by a re-

porter of less experience. But the very fact that a reporter is kept on the same story day after day, once it has been placed in his hands, operates perhaps more than anything else to give the new men opportunities to show what they can do. A beginner, no matter how bright he appeared and how willing, would never, while there were experienced men in the office, be detailed to cover a story that involved the robbery of a bank of a large amount of money by a trusted officer, and the suicide of the thief when exposure threatened. Yet, having started out with nothing more in prospect than the gathering of material for a seemingly routine death notice, a new reporter might easily within a few days find himself engaged on a story of this very kind. Getting a story which grows, a novice need only grow with it to win quick advancement.

Reporters are always expected to have a fair knowledge of the news that has already been printed, and even at the beginning of the day, the city editor reprimands any newsgatherer who gives evidence that he is not familiar with the history of the story upon which he is detailed. In New York every reporter and every editor, too, reads the *Sun*; and it is because of this that the *Sun* is often referred to as "the newspaper man's paper." It rarely overlooks anything and its stories are both concise and entertaining.

Frequently when a story requires a number of reporters to assemble in one place, as during the search of the ruins of a burned building, they work in "combination," exchange news and relieve each other for lunch or to permit visits to a telephone; and the worst violation of newspaper ethics possible for a reporter is to "hold out on" a combination and send news to his office without making it known to all. Doing this

he may make some of the other reporters lose their places and will certainly cause them to be censured. The reporter who does play false with other news-gatherers, accepts their gleanings and remains silent about his own, pays dearly for his temporary triumph. He is thereafter a marked man, and unless he is forgiven and restored to good standing, which is unusual, his newspaper career is pretty sure to come to a speedy termination. Particulars of his action having been circulated, every other reporter in the city will strive to the utmost to land him in a series of defeats, and with so many against one the defeats are sure to come. If he survive the defeats he sooner or later falls to a "plant," a sensational story manufactured and spread for his benefit, and either involves his paper in a libel suit or makes it appear ridiculous. Only when a reporter plays traitor with a combination is he placed under the ban. The man who does not care to work with the other reporters on any particular story is regarded as a fair foe if he makes it known where he stands in the beginning, and, having announced himself, need fear no skulking.

The most valuable reporter is the out-and-out specialist, the man who in some particular line is the best reporter in the city, or at least the best on his paper. There are no indispensable workers in a newspaper office, but the specialist who is thoroughly competent comes as close to being indispensable as it is possible for a newspaper worker to be. His paper can get along without him, but he fits into a place that cannot be filled by everyone. If he makes a mistake his accomplishments demand that he get other than offhand judgment, and if he is placed in the balance the question must arise: "Where is his successor?" The all-

around worker, or the ordinary department watcher, is not thus safeguarded. His hold on his place is measured exactly by the manner in which he has performed his latest task; any other all-around worker can step into his shoes the moment they are declared vacant, and in every large city there are always dozens of reporters who are out of employment. In New York an editor could easily in a single day procure twenty-five newsgatherers, and it is often said that in a like period an owner could engage an entire newspaper staff, from editor-in-chief down. But in neither event would there be a rush of high-grade specialist reporters. There are not many of them, and those that do exist are never hard put for employment.

That there are so few reporters who are thorough specialists is largely due to the fact that most reporters do not get the chance to develop themselves as they would like. If a man who wishes to become a Wall Street writer is put into a police court, he can make no direct progress toward his ambition so long as his station remains unchanged. The police court demands his entire attention from early morning, and obviously he cannot familiarize himself with the financial district and the people there either by going down at night and looking at the closed buildings, or by reading the stories written by the men already in the field. In Wall Street almost every door is guarded by a special policeman or a watchman, and outside of the private offices of the men the papers talk about are secretaries. To strangers these persons rarely unbend, and they look askance especially upon unknown newspaper representatives.

Even a reporter of twenty years' experience knows no easy method of collecting news; always he must accommodate himself to circumstances. Told to re-

port a court trial he is compelled to go to the courtroom and follow the proceedings closely, no matter how dry they be, and sent to look into an accident he must ask questions and keep on the trail wherever it leads. For all his ability and all his experience, he cannot, if by chance he is sent on a disagreeable errand, avoid the unpleasant part of it; and no reporter is exempt from being sent on small errands. Even the one who regularly gets the best assignment the city editor has to offer gets little on dull days, and never is he allowed to remain idle because there is no task suited to his ability. The war correspondent in times of peace is glad to go to fires, and he gets his full share of school-board meetings and accidents.

Incidentally, the daily-paper war correspondent is a much misunderstood person. To some extent he is a myth, for the daily newspapers of the United States have war correspondents only when there are wars. When the fighting begins, or when it promises to begin soon, the managing editor, looking over his workers, picks out several able newsgatherers who have good health and rugged constitutions and sends them to the front. So long as these men are away they are war correspondents. When they return they take up their old tasks. During the Spanish-American War the New York papers sent out as correspondents copy readers, editorial writers, city editors, race-track reporters, general work reporters, department men, and even copy boys. At least one copy boy, too, gave a good account of himself, for remaining in the background one day, when the bullets were flying, he was able later to send to his paper a fair account of the battle, and the intelligence that the man for whom he was supposed to run errands, not so discreet as him-

self, had been badly wounded and was out of service. It was after this that several editors gave notice that they valued a whole copy boy more than an incapacitated star reporter, and that any newsgatherer who ran unnecessary risk while on an assignment, thus exposing his paper to defeat, would be summarily discharged.

A reporter who wishes to hold his place and is ambitious casts about him, when he is detailed to get a piece of news, not for an easy method but for one that is safe and sure. Even when his task is an apparently simple one the experienced reporter looks at it from all sides to make certain that it is not harder than it appears to be, and he considers nothing too much trouble, for saved steps, he knows, often cost dearly. Detailed to investigate a sudden death he does not give up until he has satisfied himself that it is not a case of suicide or murder, and when he gets straightforward answers to straightforward questions, he wonders whether there is something under the surface, and does his best to find out. He verifies so far as he can every statement made to him and is slow to decide that he has the whole truth and nothing but the truth. When he is gathering material for a death notice, for example, a reporter cannot be too cautious, and unless he knows the dead person's history from end to end it will be wise for him before he starts for his office to make a few judicious inquiries among persons not directly interested, just to make sure that something has not been withheld. If he does this he will not suffer the experience of one young reporter who, after interviewing the son of a man who had just died, wrote a commonplace obituary notice only to learn to his consternation next day that the subject of his notice had twenty years before been the defendant in

an extremely sensational murder trial. Of course, the son had avoided all reference to the affair.

The danger to which a newsgatherer exposes himself when he takes a chance is well illustrated by the experience of a New York reporter, a descriptive writer of far more than ordinary ability, who was one day sent uptown to cover an exhibition by the life-saving corps of the fire department. Having written and sent to his office a story which covered most of the drill and finding that only a few minutes remained before the time set for printing the last edition of his paper, this reporter, having previously made an engagement to meet a friend, told himself that there was nothing more to do and started off. Only a minute or two after he had gone a team of horses attached to a fire engine, becoming frightened, dashed into the crowd and trampled a number of persons. The only paper in town which did not get out an extra was the one which the reporter who had decided to take a chance represented, and an hour after he reached his office next day he was out of work. Another story that is often told in New York deals with a reporter who, through luck, was enabled to score a good beat. Sent to a banquet one night he found, soon after 12 o'clock, that all the other newsgatherers had left. Before he could gain the door himself there was a cry and a fall at one of the tables, and making an investigation he learned that one of the distinguished guests had dropped dead of heart disease.

Because he is careful a reporter is often able to make a great deal out of what at first looked like a very ordinary assignment, as is illustrated by the following incident: A newsgatherer who was sent to report a church wedding, having his suspicions aroused by the

anxious manner in which the relatives of the bridegroom, a wealthy young man, insisted that the reporters should occupy seats well toward the front, entered into an alliance with another reporter which provided for an exchange of news after the ceremony, and slipping away unobserved, stationed himself where he could watch the doors. His suspicions that all was not right were further aroused when he found a couple of private detectives on guard, and they were verified when the detectives, acting on a signal given by a friend of the bridegroom, turned away a young woman who tried to enter. After pleading in vain she began to weep, and then started off, the detectives having interceded when a policeman threatened to arrest her, saying that publicity was to be avoided. Around the corner the reporter got her story, and while it was scandal, it was news of the kind his paper wanted, and he and his friend in the church with whom he shared his information scored beats that caused much comment.

News was once defined as "Fresh information of something that has lately taken place," but in these days when the newspapers are steadily encroaching on the position once occupied exclusively by the magazines, news is regarded as anything that is of interest. A reporter of the first class because he has a clear idea as to the state of the public mind, because he can convert himself into a thoroughly representative member of the body known as the public, can find news anywhere. Not what is known in editorial circles as "must," perhaps, but interesting reading of some kind. If he were placed on a desert island he could find something to write about, and it is a certainty that were he rescued, after having been so placed, one of his

first moves when he got back to civilization would be to make arrangements to get his story into print. In New York City alone there are dozens of reporters who would jump at the chance to be marooned on a desert island for a week or two, and, were the man to be marooned to be selected by competition, the reporters striving for the honor would be equaled in number by the magazine writers.

It is hardly to be expected that a beginner in a newspaper office will see possible news at every turn as does the veteran, but the novice should keep it before him that news is not necessarily positive. If a man falls off the roof of a six-story building and is killed or badly injured, the occurrence is certainly news, although it is not very important, for accidents of this general character are of daily occurrence in the large cities. But were a man to fall from the top of a six-story building and escape unhurt, the occurrence would be regarded by all editors as news of far more than ordinary worth. A recital of the unexpected and miraculous almost always eclipses a story dealing with matter of fact or ordinary events. How completely a beginner may overlook this is illustrated by the conduct of a young reporter who, sent to cover the launching of a ship, strolled into his office a few hours later and announced that the story had "failed to pan out," and that there was not much to write. "Why not?" asked the city editor. "Well," replied the reporter, "something went wrong and the ship stuck on the ways. They hope to get her into the water to-morrow." Another story of the same character, often laughed over by the reporters of a certain Western city, has to do with a beginner, who, having been told to look after a public exhibition of walking on the tight rope, returned with

the information that he had material for a paragraph only, as the exhibition had not taken place. "The man who was to do the walking," he remarked innocently, "fell out of bed this morning and broke his leg." The idea that there was news in a professional acrobat, who constantly risked his life, being hurt by a fall from his bed apparently never entered the reporter's head.

Every finished reporter is alive to the value of the unexpected, unique, odd, grotesque, sorrowful, and humorous, but the search for side issues which may be introduced and made prominent is conducted most assiduously by the representatives of the papers which belong to the sensational class. These reporters are ever on the lookout for wonders, and the oftener they find that for which they look the better are their editors satisfied. Sensations must be provided, and no reporter rests under the mistaken idea that their collection can be left entirely to other members of the staff. Employed on a sensational paper, a reporter, therefore, usually looks upon his assignment as given to him by his city editor as nothing more than a hint. Told to look into a suicide, it does not occur to him to get the facts in plain sight, or where all is not clear to let the evidence lead to a dull verdict. First, he endeavors to squeeze the suicide into a semblance of a murder. Failing in this, or the facts absolutely prohibiting the attempt, he tries to find something that will make the causes leading to the suicide a mystery. Not meeting with success in this direction, he asks whether it is not true that some other members of the suicide's family have killed themselves. Still failing to score, he goes over a list of recent self-inflicted deaths in an effort to discover the existence of a "suicide club," and, unsuccessful here, nerves himself

and perhaps lands an even more fanciful tale. When the aggressive papers are presenting stories as attractive mysteries and bolstering up their contentions with plausible arguments, the reporters and city editors of the sedate publications must make concessions unless they can present counter-attractions, for the managing editors and owners will not forever have their demands for explanations set aside by the words "yellow fake." At the end of a month they remember only that they have had to call the city editor and those under him to account many, many times. Because of this the reporters of the sedate papers are under constant temptation. If they take the stories concocted by their more strenuous co-workers, and the stories are usually free to all where the reporters are working on a big assignment, they give satisfaction and run little risk of detection. Refusing to take the stories offered, they are sure, when the sensations are sprung, to stand under suspicion of having been beaten, until they have had opportunity to explain; and a reporter is always worried when he has to make a series of explanations, for he fears that after a time the editors will tell themselves that where there is so much smoke there must be some fire, and dispense with his services on general principles.

While there is no easy method of gathering news, many assignments which stagger the beginner are easy matters to the experienced man. Suppose that two men, a beginner and an experienced worker, are sent out from different offices to ascertain whether it is true, as is rumored, that a well-known man is aiming to capture a certain political office. An evasive reply from the man will land the novice high and dry. But such a reply only starts the old hand at newsgathering

off to see the man's close friends, his enemies, the political leaders, and the political gossips. By the time he is finished with them he usually has the information for which he started, and a great deal more. Even when the subject of the rumor gives a straightforward reply the seasoned reporter outclasses the beginner, for the beginner, returning to his office, can write little more than a paragraph, whereas the experienced man can build a long story about the reply, telling, if the man has acknowledged that he desires the office, what chance he has of getting it, what the party leaders think of his candidacy, and who his strongest opponents will be. If the man denies that he wishes the office the good reporter writes about the causes leading to his decision, the probable origin of the rumor, and the candidates who really do wish to get the place. The newsgatherer of long service is always resourceful. Defeated in a dozen attempts to get a piece of news, he forms a dozen new plans and keeps on working until he attains his end, or until the time at his disposal expires. Not once in a year does an out-and-out star reporter acknowledge that he is at his wit's end.

If a reporter is assigned to a story which disappears in thin air, when, for example, he finds that a rumor he has been sent to investigate is without foundation, he says that he is on a "pipe" or a "pipe dream." Every day reporters get assignments which both they and the city editor are, at the time the assignments are given, pretty sure will come to nothing; but the city editor takes no chances and the discreet reporters follow his example. The worst thing that can happen to a reporter next to involving his paper in a libel suit is to "fall down" on a story, to miss a piece of news

he was sent to get and thus cause his paper to be "beaten" or "scooped;" and the fear of falling down is with a reporter always, day and night, awake and asleep. Take the case of the reporter who is detailed to report a bank failure. Arriving at the bank building he finds in the street before it a crowd largely made up of persons who, having deposited money in the institution, are struggling to get to the closed and locked doors. No one is inclined to make way, but he must push his way through, and after copying the notice pasted on the doors, make an effort to see someone inside who can tell him what caused the failure, how much money is involved, and whether or not the institution will resume business. While there are a hundred questions that he would like to ask, the probabilities are that, holding his own against the crowd, and getting a note directed to one of the bank officers inside the doors—and he will have trouble enough doing this, maybe pounding on the doors to attract attention in defiance of a policeman—he will, in a few minutes, be told by the watchman or clerk who took his missive that "there is nothing to say." The bank examiner, if reached, promises that "there will be a statement to-morrow." But the reporter cannot wait until the morrow for news; he must get something somewhere without delay. Convinced that the bank building is barren ground, he procures a list of the institution's directors and starts to search for them. But try as he will he cannot find them all, and those he does find are rarely communicative. The scraps they give him, though, are eagerly seized upon. While he is moving about he questions everyone he can reach who might know something about the failure, and having exhausted his resources he finds that his gleanings

pieced together give a pretty fair idea of the situation. But he does not know what the rival reporters have learned. Whatever it is, he is expected to have, when he reaches his office, as much as all of them put together, for his editor is not going to compare his story with that of one of his rivals. The facts in all of their articles will be arrayed against those in his, and he will be called to account if anything of importance has escaped him.

If he works on a morning paper, the reporter engaged on the bank failure is kept busy until well in the night writing his story. After it is finished he hands it to the man occupying the city editor's chair, and unless there is especial need of reporters is allowed to go home. He is tired, but going to bed he does not always rest well, for having worked under pressure he is nervous and restless. He is not sure that he did not miss the most important fact connected with the failure; however hard he labored he has no guarantee that someone he could not find or someone who refused to give him information has not told a rival reporter and proved to him that the failure was caused by a thieving cashier, whereas in his own account he attributed it merely to bad management. Bank failures are not weekly occurrences; but murders, big fires, robberies, embezzlements, accidents, elopements, strange disappearances, and many other similar happenings are, and, for the reporter, these things and bank failures are in the same class.

The reporter for an evening paper who is engaged on a bank failure is expected to cover the ground just as thoroughly as is the morning newspaper man, but he has much less time in which to do the work, and while he is searching for information he is frequently inter-

rupted. Editions are issued from his office at intervals of a few hours, and it is incumbent upon him to furnish fresh news for each one. Employed on most papers, he is required, if the bank is not more than a fifteen- or twenty-minute journey from his office, to go to his office to write his main story, and to drop in frequently afterward to add to it. As he is held responsible for all that goes on around the bank building, and is expected to call on directors and others who may be scattered over the city, there is plenty of cause for him to worry, and he feels very often before the day is over that his editor is taking it for granted that he can be in two or three places and doing two or three things at one time. When he is too far from his office to visit it frequently a reporter does his writing, if he cannot get permission to use a desk in an office or a store, while sitting on the steps of some building, in a hallway, or on a packing-box, and hands his manuscript over to a district messenger for delivery. Reporters employed on a few afternoon papers are not only permitted, but are expected to use the telephone rather than go to their offices, even when they are in their immediate vicinity; but papers which employ the telephone continually are particularly demanding. They want fresh news at extremely short intervals, and, usually of the aggressive type, they are ill satisfied unless they receive sensations. An evening newspaper reporter is on the anxious seat all the time.

But an editor proceeds on the theory that "nothing succeeds like success," and the reporter, no matter how well he has done previously, who wakes some morning to find to his dismay that what he long feared has happened, that he failed to get the most im-

portant feature of the news while another reporter did get it, goes to his office feeling that so far as one newspaper is concerned, his time has come. It may be that his good record will save him, but he knows that another occurrence of the kind will throw him over or surely place him on the doubtful list. A reporter who has missed news which he was expected to get may be able to give twenty reasons why he failed, but he cannot do other than admit that he did not get it. The editor argues, "You got it or you did not. You did not. Therefore you must pay the penalty." All reporters are aware of this, and occasionally one, learning that he has sustained a bad defeat, starts out to look for a new place without taking the trouble to go to his office to ascertain what the men in authority think about the matter.

Bribes are not openly offered to newspaper workers very often, but they are frequently submitted in round-about ways, and it is just as well for the beginner to be on his guard against them; the experienced man needs no caution, as he is fully aware that his honesty and loyalty constitute a good share of his stock-in-trade. Even as a matter of business, bribe-taking is not a fair venture, for a man begins to break away from newspaper work the moment the breath of suspicion attaches itself to him; an editor does not demand direct evidence when the word "bribery" comes to his ears; all that he asks is a plausible accusation. The reporter who does take a bribe is usually sorry for it, for the person who is mean enough to take advantage of his dishonesty is not above demanding future favors under threat of exposure. In most cases there would be no bribery anywhere if the desired result could be accomplished by either a com-

mand or a threat; a bribe is nothing more than a last resort.

Far more dangerous than the plain offerer of a bribe is the individual who holds out gifts. The newspaper worker cannot keep too far away from him, for while he miscalls his presents he also is tardy in making his requests. Too late to save himself the reporter may find that in return for a gift of small value, which he never desired and took only because it was forced upon him, he is supposed to deliver himself body and soul. Almost any reporter of long service can recall instances where, having accepted a cigar as a present, he discovered that in return he was expected to perform services whose value in money would purchase all the cigars he could smoke in five years. The novice needs a special warning against allowing himself to be misled, for he is more subject to temptation than the journeyman. Half the scalawags in the country, when they get into a police court, imagine that they are a thousand times more important than they are, and begin to ask how they can keep their names out of the papers. On the other hand there is an occasional police-court prisoner who takes pains to make sure that the reporters will not overlook him. It is as good as a play to see a bounder in a police court for speeding an automobile. His time for glory, he thinks, has come, and between snobbish airs to establish his position and efforts to win the reporters' favor, he manages to tell everyone of any perception just what he is. The worst punishment that can befall him is enforced continuance in the oblivion to which he is fitted and accustomed.

Harder to deal with than the man who is willing to pay for silence is the one who appeals to the re-

porter's generosity or sympathy. It is extremely difficult to turn a deaf ear to the person who says: "You have my future in your hands. Tell what has happened and I am lost. Keep quiet and I am saved, and no one will suffer. Think of my family." There may be times when it is proper for a reporter to be moved by an appeal, but he should never forget that he is paid to be the eyes and ears of a newspaper and that the editors are expected to get a chance to do any suppressing that is thought necessary. The reporter who kills news on his own responsibility betrays his paper, no matter under what other designation his action falls. He becomes a false philanthropist, or worse yet, what is known as a "genial," a man who is willing to do the right thing at somebody's else expense.

Slow as he should be in making promises about his own actions, a reporter should never allow himself to assume the responsibility of making promises for his paper. It is not safe even in seemingly trivial matters; there may come a sudden change of circumstances which lifts the affair concerned into prominence, and again editors are not unlikely to make a great stir if they discover that their province has been encroached on, no matter how little the harm done. If a green reporter dared do it, he could insure orders for a long story every time he appeared in the office by saying: "I promised not to say much about this"; and he could kill his gleanings just as readily by announcing: "I promised to give this in full." How particular editors are in this direction was indelibly impressed on the mind of a young Philadelphia reporter some years ago when, returning to his office one Saturday night after having been sent to get material for a death notice,

he told his city editor that he had been asked to hold the notice until Monday morning. The man who was dead, it seemed, had all his life opposed Sunday papers, and his relatives thought it would be disrespectful to his memory to have his obituary printed in one of his great aversions. "Did you promise?" asked the city editor, when he had heard the story. "I had to," replied the reporter, "they would give me nothing until I did."

"Well," said the city editor, "I want to print that story to-night, and I now want you to go back and tell those people that we print it to-night or not at all. And while you are there you may tell them that you had no right to promise; only took it on yourself."

The reporter's reply did not help matters: "It is five miles to the house," he said, "and the rain is pouring. Besides, I have the story, and if you are determined to print it why not go ahead?"

"Young man," the city editor announced, "I'm willing to have you drown in the rain, but I am not going to let you make this paper out a liar. Your promise was no good, but those people don't know it. Now hurry!"

The reporter returned to the house, explained the situation, and got the desired permission although it was given reluctantly, and while the lesson was a harsh one it promises to be sufficient for his entire career.

In a great city the man who would as soon be dead as out of the public eye cannot often hold the reporters up in the streets and cannot gain access to the editors to bore them with his self-centered plans, but he is by no means unknown. Indeed, if he were only aware of it, the reporters keep him on their ready reference list; and while they laugh at him behind his back, employ

him constantly when they are hard up. In an emergency he can be counted on for an expression on any subject under the sun.

Another man for the reporter to guard against is the one who is willing to tell him just what he desires to know, but always adds, "Of course, this is not for publication." A reporter who listens to a story and then keeps it from his office exposes himself to many perils. For example, his city editor may sometime ask him whether he has ever heard the story, in which case he is compelled to lie or acknowledge his deceit, or some reporter who pays no attention to promises may print the story and thus subject him to defeat; and again, having given his promise, he is placed in an embarrassing position when the same news reaches him from another source, this time without the secrecy obligation, for printing it he is almost certain to offend his original informant and lay himself open to the charge of breaking his word.

While hunting for news a reporter, particularly a department man, has to ask direct and leading questions. It is not sufficient for him to go into an office and ask, "What is new to-day?" or "Have you any news?" Most people do not know news when they see it unless it is in print, and questions like these are usually futile. Even court policemen and court clerks, with whom reporters come into daily contact, are slow to see the picturesque or odd. They can see the news in a murder trial, in the sentencing of a prisoner, and in a row in the courtroom, but tears and pitiful leave-takings are to them only everyday incidents not worth remembering. When one of these men sends for a reporter, saying that he has a story for him, it is usually to tell him about a picnic, the presentation of

a token of esteem, or a meeting of some minor political organization. A reporter must keep himself informed about current topics and ask specifically for what he wants. Interviewing an officer of a corporation after a directors' meeting the questions should be: "What dividend was declared?" "Is this the usual dividend?" "Were any new directors elected?" and "Is there a minority report?" A director who has something to conceal is not going to unbosom himself when he is merely asked: "Did anything happen?"

A reporter should invariably get as close to the source of news as he can. He wastes time if he goes to clerks and underlings; generally they do not know what is going on, and when they do they are afraid to speak. Then, too, their time is not their own, and under the eyes of their superiors they do not dare engage in conversation. Going into a bank a reporter should aim for the president or the cashier. They run the institution and are held accountable for its welfare, and although they may be reluctant to talk they cannot afford to create suspicion by evasive replies or silence. What they say, also, can be accepted as correct, for their positions demand that they speak the truth. There are, however, many places where a reporter will find it to his advantage to keep in with the subordinates, for, kindly disposed, they can often give him hints—"tips," the reporters say—that certain things are in the wind. For the purpose of verifying a "tip," a newsgatherer cannot go too high.

A reporter cannot afford to let himself be put off or side-tracked. When he goes to a man to ask a certain question he wants to ask that question, and, as forcibly as he dare, insist on an answer. If he does not understand the answer, he should say so. If need be, he can

appear to be a trifle dense; it will not hurt him and it may produce the result. Never does he want to be so bright that he can interpret a smile, a shrug of the shoulders, or a wink, as long as he is in a position to ask questions. Here is where an inexperienced reporter often fails. Sent to ask an embarrassing question he approaches the subject evasively, and only half states his case. The object of his attentions, quick to see his advantage, gives the reporter a little flattery, answers the question in words that might mean anything, hints that the reporter is a good fellow, hands him a cigar and lands him out in the hall, bewildered and defeated. If there is to be any talk about the weather or the political situation, the reporter should be the one to bring it about. And there is a time and a place for this sort of thing. Getting a man to say something which, there is reason to believe, he might later wish to have left unsaid, a reporter's cue is to retire before the change of mind comes; but it does not do for him to make a dash for the door or take to his heels, for this course would only bring the object of his questions to earth in a hurry and not unlikely lead him to retract his words or declare that he does not wish to be quoted. Instead, having accomplished the purpose of his errand, the reporter should change the subject, play the admirer himself, and make his exit gracefully, leaving the other man to wake up when he sees what he has said staring at him in print.

There is nothing that acts more quickly and effectively as a suppressor of news than a notebook and pencil wrongly displayed, and knowing this, time-tried reporters cultivate their memories; they take notes without restraint only when they are after news which

is on plain view and which no one can forbid them to gather. A reporter does not have to be in the newspaper business very long before he has the bad effects of note-taking impressed upon him. Intent on getting a piece of news he meets someone who can give him what he desires, and is getting along swimmingly when, wishing to jot down a fact, he pulls out paper and pencil. Instantly there comes a change. His informant, realizing what he had overlooked, that he is not delivering a confidential talk, freezes up, refuses to say anything more, and probably begs off for what he has already said. Politicians interested in factional fights are particularly prone to do this, and political reporters aware of the fact never take notes if they can help it while getting interviews. Good interviewers train their memories so that they can, without the aid of a note, write out a ten minutes' talk almost word for word hours after they have heard it; and in an emergency they can carry a half-dozen brief interviews in their heads at one time, and later put them on paper without getting them mixed or losing their salient points.

Occasionally, but as a resort and not as a time and labor saver, reporters can use the telephone to good advantage; just how can be illustrated as well by the following story as by an indefinite explanation. A young reporter, and it happened that it was one of his early assignments, detailed because men were scarce to the reported failure of one of the largest retail stores in the United States, found, reaching the store, that the doors were locked and that no response was made to repeated knockings. One of the reporters, of whom probably a dozen were present, had learned that the head of the firm was inside, and all of the newsgather-

ers joined in saying that a talk with this individual was the thing most in demand. The young reporter, to whom no attention was paid, was wondering where his hoped for honors were to be won in the face of the existing circumstances, when, happening, to glance through a drug store window, his eyes fell on a telephone booth. In a minute he was inside the booth, calling the store to which access was so much desired. The response was quick. "I would like to speak to the proprietor, Mr. Blank," said the young man, almost overcome by the thought of his audacity. There was a moment's silence and then a voice said: "This is Mr. Blank, what is it?" Trying hard to keep cool, the reporter told who he was and said that he wanted to ask whether the firm had failed. Had he planned for a week he could not have framed his question better. The word "failed" was a slap in the face for Mr. Blank. "No, sir," he shouted, "it is not a failure, only a temporary affair," and he followed this with an announcement that the firm could pay its debts and would pay them. Then he denounced several persons who he said were trying to ruin him and started to give figures. At this point there was a bang at the store end of the wire and the connection was broken. To the reporter it sounded as if someone had taken the telephone receiver from Mr. Blank's hand and thus silenced him; at any rate, the reporter could not raise the store again. But what he had already procured enabled him to send a quarter-column interview to his paper, and some of the things in it were so turned to advantage by the city editor that the paper was able to print a two-column story, which showed that Mr. Blank had, by neglecting his business, lost track of its affairs, and that he was a bankrupt without knowing it. The

articles printed by the other papers all missed the mark, and none embraced an interview.

In the face of the foregoing tale it is only fitting that a warning should be given against employing the telephone to save time. It does not pay. The reporter may get answers to his questions, but hanging up the receiver, he cannot be sure that had he been face to face with his informant he would not have seen enough to induce him to double his list of questions or to change their complexion. No matter what his errand a reporter should get as close to the fountain head of information as possible, and this holds good even when the questions he has to ask are disagreeable to the last degree. No newsgatherer is so callous that he likes to ask a man whether he has deserted his wife; but, detailed to get information of this kind, a discreet reporter stifles his feelings and, going to the man, perhaps with an apology, submits the question. In a matter of this kind it is not safe to trust to the man's friends, and even lawyers are occasionally misinformed as to their client's doings.

A reporter, to tell the plain truth, cannot afford to be above his work or "above his job," as the New York newsgatherers say. A reporter is a reporter, and the one who allows his misgivings to interfere with his activity had better look for more pleasing employment, for whether he sees it or not, he plays false with his employer and takes pay that he does not earn. An incident in the life of a certain New York reporter will serve to illustrate the danger of permitting inclinations to interfere with duty. Sent to a New Jersey town one summer to look into a supposed murder mystery, he found the local police and a few outside detectives devoting their energies to an endeavor to establish the

victim's identity. The body, which had been found in a deserted stone quarry, was lying in a temporary morgue, and after listening to the descriptions of some of the other newsgatherers, of whom about a dozen were engaged on the story, the reporter in question decided that he did not care to view it himself; and he did not. For two days the newspaper representatives had plenty to write; then they settled down to wait for an identification. Men and women by the hundred, many from other places, called to see the body, that of a well-dressed young man, but although a half-dozen supposed identifications were made, none of them, when run down, came to anything. On the evening of the fourth day the reporter with whom this tale is immediately concerned, sitting in front of the morgue, was astonished to see coming up the street two New York merchants with whom he was acquainted. Accosting them, he found them in low spirits, and when they started inside he decided to go along. The sheet that covered the body was thrown back. "It's he," whispered one of the newcomers. "It's my brother." The reporter said nothing, but he did some rapid thinking, for in the dead man he recognized a person he well knew, at least, by sight, and he had good reason to know him well, for the man had in New York lived next-door to his boarding-house. After the identification was established the reporters learned that they had been at work on a suicide instead of a murder story, but the sensitive reporter had not, two years later, decided just how he ought to label the incident in his personal recollections.

Here is as good a place as any to speak about the necessity of dealing circumspectly with identifications of persons, either living or dead. Almost every week

in the station houses in New York persons before whom a line of men is paraded for the purpose of giving them a chance to pick out the one who has robbed them, settle upon a detective or a corner loafer called in to add to the line's length, instead of the supposed thief, and it is a common occurrence in the courts for men identified as the perpetrators of crimes to prove conclusively that they are innocent, and that when the crimes were committed they were miles away. Identifications of the dead are even more perplexing and uncertain. Hardly a day passes in New York that both men and women are not reported to Police Headquarters as missing from home, and while the majority of them no doubt reappear after brief intervals there are constantly many families which are alarmed for the safety of persons dear to them. As a result of this, every time the newspapers report the presence at the Morgue of a well-dressed body, the place is besieged. And terror-stricken, half-hysterical, and perhaps remorseful, a good many of the visitors see what they fear to see instead of what confronts them, with the consequence that the police are sent on wild-goose chases that end when they discover the supposed dead men or women alive and well, but furious over the newspaper notoriety that has been thrust upon them. The morbid and curious are almost as bad as those who have friends missing in announcing identifications, and they are more of a menace to contentment, for from them no one is safe. Without a shadow of cause and without a thought about what may result, they will blurt out names, even of persons with whom they have no acquaintance and whom they have never seen except at a distance. Some individuals attempt so much of this thing that the police get to know them and shoo them

away from the Morgue whenever they appear. So often were the reporters misled by one of these irresponsibles in New York several years ago that, on the occasion of his last appearances, they referred to him in print as the "Great American Identifier." A reporter should look askance on all identifications unless the proof is indisputable, and he should not forget that numbers or the majority do not insure correctness. If a penny is tossed before a crowd of one hundred men and ninety-nine cry "heads," the hundredth man who cries "tails" has exactly as much chance as do all the others put together.

## CHAPTER XII

### WRITING A NEWSPAPER STORY

To the satisfaction of experienced men who like to work free-handed, and the sorrow of beginners who are on the lookout for guides, there is no detailed formula for the construction of a newspaper story. If individual office requirements are excepted, there are only two rules that can be employed, and even these two fail of application in a great many instances. This leads to the explanation that the articles printed in the newspapers—the editorials excepted—can be divided into two classes. First, there are stories that deal with pure news, accounts of fires, accidents, business failures, elections, and a thousand and one other phases of life. These must be printed; the public demands them, and it is to supply the demand that newspapers exist. The second class is made up of what are generally called human-interest stories, stories that are printed not so much to convey information as to furnish amusement, arouse sympathy, or merely to entertain.

The difference between the two varieties of stories is easily illustrated, and at the same time it can be shown that both may be built on the same basis, and that the class in which a story falls depends generally upon the intention of its writer. Let it be supposed that Solomon Simon, an emigrant, poverty-stricken, in poor health, out of work, homeless, friendless, and homesick for

his native land, gives up the struggle for existence and kills himself. His death is of little insistent news value and may be dismissed with a paragraph; dozens of suicides of this general character get brief mention in the papers every month. If space were in demand this particular one would be recorded something like this: "Solomon Simon, a despondent tailor, killed himself yesterday at 666 Allen Street by inhaling illuminating gas." This a brief news story. But it is possible to treat Solomon Simon's death in another manner. If an energetic space-paid reporter, detailed to look into the suicide, chanced to come across someone who was familiar with Simon's life history, and returned to his office to find that there was need of material to fill empty columns, he would probably write a story that told of Solomon Simon's boyhood, his ambitions, his love affairs, his desertion of home for the land of promise, the blasting of his hopes, the struggle for existence, the growing hardships, and the end of his career with promise of a resting place in the Potter's Field. This would be a human-interest story.

For the construction of a human-interest story there is no only way any more than there is an only way for the construction of a magazine article or a novel. No matter how it proceeds it gets editorial sanction if it is good reading. But a human-interest story that fails is a sad affair. Making pretensions it dare not be mediocre; and it is a particularly sad affair if, while too poorly written to print, it has in it news that must go into the paper, for a story of this type defies ordinary copy reading methods and yields only to the rewriters. Editors are continually looking for original writers, men who can produce something new, but they are looking for the finished product and not

for experimenters, and because of this beginners should do their very best when they try human-interest stories. Most of the good stories of this type that appear in the papers are the work of the star reporters.

It is with pure news stories that the two rules already referred to have to do. The first rule is: "Always begin your story with the most important fact"; the second is, "Take up the various incidents in the order of their importance, reserving unessentials for the last." The first rule calls for an explanation, for it has an implied meaning that might be overlooked. Before a reporter can determine accurately which part of a story is the most important he must, of course, procure every detail; missing only one he cannot make a sure selection, for the one that is missed may be the one that outranks all the others. What the rule really says, then, is that a reporter should first get every fact and then begin his story with the most important one. Both the rules are in force in every newspaper office in the land, and it is highly important that the beginner keep them before him. But it is not enough that he get the rules themselves. Their application is the part that counts, and to apply them is not so easy as might appear; even the star reporters in the best offices go far astray occasionally. When John Smith falls and breaks his leg, and the accident has to be recorded, there is, if there are no incidents worth mentioning connected with the occurrence, not much chance for originality, and the reporter may be pardoned for starting his story "John Smith, 34 years old, of 1661 Third Avenue." But when a whole staff of reporters sticks as closely to evident facts, and the public is compelled to look upon a series of articles beginning, "Mary Jones, 32, of 67 Lenox Street, was

arraigned in the Jefferson Market Police Court today," and "Policeman Brown of the Mulberry Street station was patrolling his beat this morning," it is evident that a good rule is being made ridiculous. The trouble is that it is extremely easy to mistake the primary or most obvious fact for the most important one, and when this mistake is made a machine construction introduction is the invariable result.

The introduction of a newspaper story is the part that counts heaviest, for this is the bait that attracts or scares off readers. Every experienced reporter realizes, too, that the quality of the introductions he writes has a great deal to do with the standing he acquires in his superiors' estimation. A good introduction will sometimes act as a passport for a story that is not high class all through, but a story that is good as a whole stands little chance of getting into print without many alterations if it is headed by a weak beginning. Rarely does the city editor read a story from end to end before it gets into print; ordinarily, as has been pointed out, his judgment is formed on the quality of the introduction alone. With the copy readers it is much the same. Finding that a story makes a good start they go through it favorably disposed. But compelled to worry over the opening, they apparently get into the habit of making corrections and slash right and left. Aware of all this a time-tried reporter will often make a half-dozen starts before he gets an opening sentence that suits him.

Properly constructed, a pure news story begins with the climax, the story's most dramatic or noteworthy incident, and works backward. The opening sentence tells the main facts and the complete introduction contains a summary or forecast of what is to follow.

Thus, in writing about a small fire in which lives were lost, a reporter does not tell of the starting of the fire, and lead up to the loss of life. Instead, he makes the fire a secondary matter and opens his story with the announcement: "Two men lost their lives in a fire in Broome Street last night." The persons who wish to learn about the fire itself must read further. An introduction should always be brief, and the first sentence should be a short one. Experienced reporters never begin to write without having a pretty fair idea of the manner in which their stories are to proceed. All the time they are collecting information they subconsciously arrange their finds in some sort of order, and on their way to their offices at the close of a search for news they plan in more or less detail the form in which their information shall go on paper. Free to choose, an ambitious reporter, returning to his office to write, will keep to himself every time and his mind will be active every foot of the way.

The body of a news story, if the second rule for newspaper writing, the one which says that the facts must be marshaled in the order of their importance, is observed, is itself an introduction drawn out. First, it explains the climax, and this over, passes on to take up the various incidents as they are demanded to make the story proceed intelligently. The unessentials come last. A story constructed on this plan has two strong points. It can be cut off almost anywhere if space is at a premium; and appearing in the paper, it does not hold the reader in suspense and demand a complete reading. The story that does not explain as it goes gets harsh treatment in a large newspaper office, and usually brings a reprimand for the writer. Remembering the two rules for writing, a young reporter need

only turn to a high-class city newspaper to see how they are applied. To give examples of well-written stories here there is no need. The examples, were they presented, might easily be pronounced bad ones by someone to whom they did not appeal, and they would in addition be nothing more than personal selections. The stories that appear in the papers may be accepted as good examples or at least as examples that have passed the scrutiny of a city editor, a copy reader, and a managing editor, or a managing editor's assistant.

Of rules for writing that are in force in individual offices there is no end. Every time a reporter changes from one paper to another he encounters a lot of new ones, and he is not astonished if in one place he is told to do something that in another was strictly forbidden. In one office a steamship is always a steamship, a boat, or a vessel; it must never be called a ship, the contention being that a ship is never anything else than a square-rigged vessel carrying sails. In another office a ship must never be called a vessel, the editors saying that a vessel is a utensil for holding liquors. There are dozens of these contradictions. But the discreet reporter learns the rules of his office and observes them carefully, no matter what he thinks of them. Usually these rules are warnings, consisting of a series of "don'ts," and in many establishments the official "don't" list is regarded in the light of a text-book, the supposition apparently being that, avoiding the wrong things, a reporter will hit upon the right ones. In reality, the "don'ts" are always of a negative value. It does not help a green reporter in the slightest to tell him not to use "commence" for "begin," or "couple" for "two," and the man who studies a "don't" list in the hope of learning how to

write needs sympathy. The "do" list when it exists at all usually consists of a half-dozen rules like "Use 'on' before name of day," and "Do observe sequence of tenses." There is, however, a lot of advice that might be given to beginners and some of it is here presented.

A newspaper story must be clear. Its main purpose is to convey information, and when it does not do this there is no reason for its existence. A reporter's first aim should be, therefore, to construct his story so that he cannot be misunderstood. If he can combine literary style with clearness, well and good; if he cannot, literary style must be relegated to the background. It is always better to repeat a name than to use a pronoun where there is a possibility of ambiguity, and it is just as well to avoid the words "former" and "latter." Short words are always to be preferred to long ones, and it is not necessary to designate a thing in a dozen different ways simply to avoid repeating a word; calling a modern fifteen-story hotel an inn, a tavern, and a caravansary verges close on the ridiculous. Short sentences, too, are preferable in newspaper writing; long, involved ones are not desired in any office, and on some papers there is a rule that no sentence shall be printed which occupies more than seven lines of type. Incidentally, if a reporter is called upon to correct a proof he should endeavor, changing a word or a sentence, to write in about as much as he takes out, thus rendering it possible for the printer to make the change without running over or respacing many lines to "make even." Should the word "penitentiary," for example, be supplanted by "jail," the printer has to reset four or five lines at least before he can cover up the change. Where a

long word has to be taken out and none is to go in its place, the best plan is to cut out enough other words to permit the removal of an entire line.

Next to clearness the quality which an editor most likes to see displayed in a newspaper story is sprightliness, or at least readability. There are some stories printed in the papers, such as legal proceedings, that are necessarily formal and dry, but were it possible the wide-awake editor would have none of this. Could he do it he would make accounts of funerals even pleasant and attractive reading. The stories which he admires are those which, alive and full of vigor, move with a good swing. Even a sad story must have life in it to meet his approbation. The sadness must be set forth realistically and strongly, without a suspicion of bathos, and there dare be no halting, no signs of weakness. For dullness an editor will take no excuse. Be it displayed either in a man or in a story he puts upon it at the earliest possible moment the mark of his disapproval.

A reporter who wishes to succeed aims to give all his stories a touch of originality. A star newsgatherer chancing to be sent to a small tenement-house fire will search the house from top to bottom, or if need be, the entire neighborhood, to find an incident odd, amusing, or sorrowful, and not infrequently will write a long story that, while based on the fire, is supported by a pedestal of such extreme slenderness that it is hardly perceptible. He may for the main feature of a fire story take the destruction of a family heirloom, the rescue of a pet dog, the marvelous escape from suffocation of a canary bird, an accident to a fireman, the enormous crowd attracted by the fire, the unusually large number of engines summoned, or the presence in

the crowd of notable persons. A reporter, however, must handle local color with discretion. The man who fails to keep it within reason runs a risk of getting a talk of the kind given a New York reporter who, sent to look after a \$200,000 grain elevator fire, delivered to his city editor a column story of which over two-thirds was devoted to a description of the uses of a grain elevator and the methods employed in its operation; or worse still, find himself in the predicament of the man who, while congratulating himself on the excellence of his column story telling of the rescue of a parrot from a burning tenement, was hastily summoned to the managing editor's office and there confronted with an issue of a rival paper which, under a large heading, made it known that the fire had burned two women to death.

Because vigor is so highly esteemed by editors it often happens that a novice at the start gets a higher ranking than he deserves. His initial efforts arouse high hopes that practice will enable him to do wonderful things; but at the end of six months it is found that the experience gained is more than offset by the freshness lost. Another individual who is well known in the big newspaper offices is the "one-story man." This reporter brings with him one good story or one original idea. Presenting it to view he comes in for praise. But never is his success repeated. So common is this performance that many editors contend that every man who walks has one good story in him.

The idea promoted by school-teachers, among whom it is apparently a tradition, and fostered by the "Rules for Writing for the Press," that appear among the back pages of some text-books, that everything written for a newspaper must be boiled down to the last degree is all

nonsense. An editor does not allow a reporter to take up space by saying the same thing in different ways, but he rarely requires him to express a good story in the briefest form possible. If condensation were a high virtue two-page newspapers would be common, for there are not many stories which could not be crowded into a few paragraphs. Instead of demanding compression an editor merely asks that each sentence say something; that the story grow as its length increases. The ability to fill space is esteemed fully as highly as the ability to condense, and a first-class man is expected to be able to do either equally well. Not allowed to say the same thing in different ways, a reporter told to expand a story has only one resource, to keep on adding on details; and that he is able to add the details, although some of them may be far from essential, proves that he is a good newsgatherer. An experienced reporter can determine when a story is not worth much as well as can an editor, but when he encounters a story which can be condensed or expanded as suits the editor's fancy or the demand for material, he pursues the news as if he knew that a long story would be in order. Then returning to his office, he is prepared to give satisfaction in either direction. A lesson along this line was administered to a young reporter in New York a few years ago when he told his city editor that he had learned that two cases of smallpox, the first discovered in the city for several years, had been reported to the Board of Health. "Write a half column about it," said the city editor. The young reporter reluctantly announced that he could not fill the space, whereupon another man was assigned to the story. When the second man returned to the office the printers were crying for copy and the city

editor doubled his former demands. "Write a column," he said, "the story is worth it." As if he had been expecting this order all along the experienced man got to work and produced a story of the required length that was good reading to the end. He told how the new cases happened to be discovered, told all that was known of their history, gave interviews with the health board officers on the likelihood of an epidemic, dealt with the danger of contagion and the efficacy of vaccination, and ended with a reference to the last cases previously found in the city and a history of smallpox epidemics.

Technical words should be avoided, as they may confuse the ordinary reader. That this is true is often proved when an editor, after the announcement of some wonderful discovery in the realms of science, employs an expert to prepare an article on the subject. The expert, understanding the matter in all its details and perfectly familiar with previous accomplishments in the same line, cannot conceive that the whole matter is a closed book to most persons and submits an article that entirely fails of its purpose. Highly entertaining and instructive to a small number it is absolutely unintelligible to the great majority. This was well illustrated when the discovery of the Roentgen rays was made known. Few of the articles published succeeded in telling more than what could be accomplished by the use of the rays; and most of those which were readable were written not by scientists but by reporters whose mental alertness enabled them to comprehend involved explanations and set them forth in everyday words.

On an evening paper the past tense should be employed wherever possible, thus doing away with the

necessity of rewriting and changing late in the day. A beginner is often placed at a disadvantage when he is told to write in the past tense about something that is still in the future, but the experienced men are usually clever enough to overcome the difficulty. Not once in a week does an old-time evening paper reporter write a story that has to be changed in the late editions. Instead of beginning a story, "The detectives who are looking for the murderer of John Smith hope to catch him before night," thus calling for a change of tense all through in case the murderer is caught, he writes: "The detectives engaged in searching for the murderer of John Smith announced this morning that they hoped to catch him before the day was over." Then if the murderer is captured the reporter embodies the information in a paragraph, and the old story is printed with the paragraph serving as an introduction. Examples of this sort of thing are to be found in the evening papers every day. In the summer the reporter writes: "New York awoke this morning feeling that it was in for another scorching day," and in the winter he writes: "The local forecaster announced this morning after he had received his reports and consulted his instruments that the city was in for a snowstorm." In either case the story can run as it is, no matter what happens, and can be brought up to the minute by the addition of a new introduction at any time.

The subject of new introductions calls for an exposition of the "lead," "insert," and "add," all of which are continually employed in newspaper offices. The lead has really already been explained, for a lead is a new introduction; but a few words more will be given it. It would never do for a paper printing a column-

long account of a court trial to reserve the verdict of the jury, the climax of the whole story, for the closing sentence; yet an evening paper printing a running account of the proceedings probably has a column story in its pages before the verdict is rendered. Where this is the case the reporter who is attending the trial, when the verdict is announced, writes a new introduction and sends it to his office marked, "Lead, murder trial." A copy reader sees that in the next edition of the paper the story starts with the new introduction. On a progressive afternoon paper almost every long running story is provided with a new lead for every edition.

The "insert" is a paragraph that goes into the body of a story, usually to explain in detail. Thus a reporter writing about a fire may say that several persons were rescued by the firemen. Later, when he ascertains the names of the persons rescued, he writes this information and turns it over to the copy reader who read the story marked "Insert fire," whereupon the copy reader cuts out the original indefinite reference to the rescues and substitutes the new paragraph. The insert is particularly useful in adding to "Among those present."

The "add" is nothing more than an addition to a story and is employed when the reporter, while having fresh information, does not deem it of sufficient importance to form the basis of a new lead. The lead, insert, and add are all written as if they were complete stories. They have to begin with paragraphs, the first page is always No. 1, and at the close the reporter writes "The End." A part of a story which he expects to supplant later with an insert the reporter should include in a separate paragraph so that it

may be "lifted" without disturbing the rest of the article.

Any report which grows as the day advances is called a "running story," and nothing pleases a space-paid reporter better than to be sent to a court trial to write a story of this kind. The news is unfolded as if for his exclusive benefit, he is in no danger of defeat so long as he does not go to sleep, and he is pretty sure to get a lot of "space" into the paper. The old-style definite question and answer court report is very rarely used now. Instead the papers usually present accounts written in the conversational style. All the unessential questions and answers are omitted, but the reporter endeavors to tell not only what occurred but how it occurred. Thus he writes:

"What!" shouted the prosecuting attorney, advancing and shaking his finger in the witness's face. "Do you mean to say that you were in the room at this time and did not hear the shot fired?"

"I certainly do," the witness replied, adding after a moment's pause, "I'm hard of hearing."

"You must be," remarked the prosecutor, as he turned to consult his assistant.

John Jones, the next witness, declared that he was asleep in a corner at the time of the shooting, and made way for Policeman Richard Brown, who took the defendant into custody. Brown told how he had been called into the saloon.

"What time was this?" interrupted the prosecuting attorney.

"Five minutes after midnight," was the reply.

The easiest form of newspaper writing is the quotation, and the consequence is that interviewing is done

to extremes. Every Tom, Dick, and Harry gets the chance to tell what he knows in print, and usually he takes a quarter of a column to say what might be better said in a few lines. Many times a reporter writes his story in the form of an interview because he knows that in this way he can fill more space than he could in any other. Then, accused of padding or of writing poor English, he takes refuge behind the excuse that he was quoting. The pliability of the quotation and the imaginary brilliancy of some reporters, combined, have in more than one city added materially to the difficulty of gathering news. Sent to get a piece of news and getting nothing more than a cool reception, they write long articles setting forth the questions they asked and follow each question with the reply, "I have nothing to say," "I decline to answer," or "I refuse to talk for publication." This sort of performance has its effect in certain quarters, with the result that a reporter, asking a truck-driver how he happened to run over a child, is greeted with: "I refuse to talk for publication," or asking a janitor about a robbery, hears, "I decline to discuss the matter." Often, a reporter who gets a setback of this kind has cause to wonder whether he has not contributed to his own discomfiture.

On a morning paper every reporter has to be able to write his own stories, but on the more aggressive evening papers there are now many men employed who devote themselves exclusively to gathering news. All the information they pick up is telephoned to the offices and there put on paper by corps of clever writers who are able to make the most of whatever comes to them. These office writers know exactly what style of writing the editors want, which results in stories uniformly satisfactory, and being rapid typewriter operators they

help to get the news into print in a hurry. For the past five years the evening papers have been coming to depend more and more upon the telephone, until now, in some establishments the reporters never return to the office with their information ; they would be censured if they did, for the editors hold that a man's time is always worth more than the saving he would accomplish by delivering his news in person. Through the use of the telephone, too, the editors succeed in keeping their reporters busy every minute, for as soon as a man has finished giving a story over the wire, he is detailed to a fresh assignment. Some of these reporters get even their first assignments of the morning over the wire, being required to call up their city editor as soon as they have eaten their breakfast, and thus have no reason to visit the office, except once a week to get their pay. They are expected, too, to make these visits on their own time. Of course, the reporter who is measured only by his ability to gather news, must give continual satisfaction. A serious defeat is not necessary to land him out of work; he need be only a little slow in getting to a telephone.

The beginner on a newspaper is pretty sure, either in his searches for news or in his contests with the other reporters, to meet with experiences that seem to him to be worth telling about, and, because of this, he needs the warning that most editors hold fast to the belief that the public not only does not care to learn what the reporters have done, but is best pleased when no mention is made of them. Unless a reporter, therefore, does something far out of the ordinary, he had better not mention his performances in his stories; certainly before spending much time writing about himself he should consult his city editor.

More and more are the employees of daily papers coming to be looked upon as part of the machinery. The personal pronoun "I" now has for company in oblivion, so far as most papers are concerned, the editorial "we," and complaint is made whenever a man who edits news passes a story which even, keeping the writer's personality out of sight to the extent that he is referred to by no appellation, allows a conclusion or an opinion to supplant facts. Thus an editor is quick to pounce upon a reporter who, returning from a public meeting, writes that a man is a wonderful orator, and inform him that he is to confine himself to his province : tell what the man said, how he said it, and how his speech was received by the crowd ; then allow the readers to decide about the rating of the man as an orator. Again, an editor protests when a reporter writes about a "terrible catastrophe," or "an awful storm." These expressions, in addition to being hackneyed, are uncalled for, as a recital of facts will permit the readers to form their own conclusions. "The scene beggars description," is forbidden in all large offices, because it is an expression of opinion, a stock phrase which has outlived its usefulness, and because it says in effect that the writer acknowledges that the task which he is about to attempt is beyond his limitations. This particular phrase appearing in an introduction never fails to arouse a city editor's anger, and occasionally the offender gets a chance to ruminate over a remark something like: "Evidently, I should have sent a reporter out on that story."

Humor, the beginner is likely to find, is highly esteemed by his city editor, and because of this he needs to be warned against trying to be funny at the expense of the proprieties. If a man falls into a bed of mortar

and is pulled out unhurt, the reporter can be as keen as he pleases; but if the man is taken out dead or badly hurt there is certainly no occasion for mirth. Not often does a reporter forget himself so far as to attempt levity in a story that has to do with a death, but almost every beginner does have to be called to account for offending in a lesser degree. Good taste should always be remembered.

Good tools are necessary for good work, and for a reporter, whether he uses a typewriter or not, this means good lead pencils and plenty of them. The man who tries to write with a scratchy or smudgy pencil wastes time every day that is worth more than a box of good pencils, and the same thing is true of the man who has only one pencil and has to stop to sharpen it every five minutes, while he is writing. Pencil and knife borrowers are both nuisances. The beginner should buy a dozen pencils—there are two kinds that are in high favor with New York reporters—sharpen the whole lot with his own knife and keep them handy. At least one pencil he should carry with him always, for a reporter without a pencil is like a soldier without a gun.

Inability to write a hand that can be easily read is a serious drawback. Poor writing can generally be read by the copy readers, but the compositors, getting only small parts of stories and thus being unable to "make sense," are always hampered by illegible words. Hair lines are barred as the compositors have to read at a distance of about two feet, and the stub pen is forbidden because it blots.

A reporter should write a uniform hand, keep the number of words on a page about the same, and be able to estimate his copy in type space. A city editor

always provides copy paper of one size, which makes the estimating easy. Incidentally, when the city editor asks for a "stick" story, he means one that in type will fill between two and a half and three inches.

There is probably no one who is not aware that copy must be written on one side of the paper only, but it is not everyone who knows why. The reason is that the pages are pasted together in the composing room and cut into new sizes.

Use plenty of paper, is the best of advice. Leave a margin of two inches at the top of each page to facilitate the joining of the pages in the composing room; leave an inch margin at the left of each page; and give the copy reader a chance by leaving space for interlineations. Do not try to crowd words, particularly at the bottom of a page. Take a new sheet of paper rather than crowd, but a sheet that bears only a few words should be attached to the preceding one. Never run a word or a name from one page to another. In starting a story leave a space of four or five inches at the top of the page for the writing of the heading.

Always number your pages, beginning with 1. Place the figures in the middle at the top, and write them plainly; make them prominent. If your story goes to the copy reader a page at a time, add a catch line to the number, thus: "1 Storm," "2 Storm." A copy reader, when he has three or four stories coming to him piecemeal, must have some way of keeping track of them.

At the end of a story draw three short vertical marks and surround them by a ring, or else within a circle write, "The End."

Make frequent paragraphs and before each one place a paragraph mark, not forgetting to indent. A new paragraph should be started with every change of subject. Where a sentence ends at the bottom of a page and there is danger that the printer will make a paragraph where none is desired, run a line from the last word down to the edge of the paper and run another line from the first word on the following page to the top of the paper. These lines notify the printer to "make even." When a paragraph ends at the bottom of a page add a paragraph mark.

Do not erase or write over. When you have made a mistake run your pencil through the words that are to be omitted, and make a fresh start. Do not leave one or two words scattered among a nest of corrections, as they may be overlooked. Rewrite sentences or paragraphs rather than run any risk.

When quoting, place quotation marks at the beginning only of each paragraph except the last one, which carries marks at both the beginning and the end. A quotation within a quotation carries single marks, 'thus,' and a quotation within this carries "double marks." Quotations that carry more than two sets of marks are not allowed. Another form of expression must be employed.

Italics and parenthesis marks are forbidden in many offices, and even when allowed they should be used sparingly. A single line drawn under a word tells the printer that it is to go in *Italics*. Two lines call for **SMALL CAPITALS**, and three lines for **CAPITALS**.

Do not abbreviate. A circle drawn around a number or an abbreviated word instructs the printer to spell it out, but the device is not looked upon with favor, as it only shifts work to the printers' shoulders.

In most offices numbered streets up to and including one hundred are spelled out.

Punctuate, if you know how. If you do not know how do not attempt to cover up your ignorance by throwing in marks at random. Until you learn how to punctuate, be content with marking periods. Make your periods large enough to be seen easily. Many reporters surround the dot with a circle, or use a small cross instead of the dot.

If you purposely misspell a word or make an absurd statement, write on the margin: "Follow Copy." If you do not the printer may attempt a correction.

Be sure that you do not omit the word "not." This is a common mistake and it always makes trouble: the trouble is serious if the "not" happens to be omitted from in front of a word like "guilty."

If your capital letters are of the same form as your small letters and differ from them in size only, mark your capitals by drawing three lines under them. In some offices capitals must differ from small letters in form as well as size.

Always cross the t's and dot the i's. Fearing that a u will be taken for an n, make a small mark under it. Mark an n by a line above. If you are not sure that any word will be understood print it. Don't take chances.

Be careful of streets and numbers. Do not write street where you mean avenue, and be extremely careful not to transpose numbers.

Print proper names where there is the least chance of mistake and be sure to spell a name the same way all through a story; nothing angers the average man more than to have his name misspelled in a newspaper. Ask how names are spelled if you are in doubt while

gathering news; half the time it is not safe to trust to sound—Burns and Byrnes, for example. Take pains to get surnames and initials; usually there is no excuse for writing: "A man of the name of Jones."

In writing a death notice be positive about initials; do not be content with referring to the city directory for them. A death notice should invariably include the person's age, cause of death and time, and time and place of funeral.

Names of railroads should be given in full.

Be watchful in writing firm names. The New York reporter who wrote that Blank & Co., brokers, had made an assignment, when it was J. B. Blank & Co. who were in trouble, involved himself and his paper in difficulties that made work for the lawyers. It happened that two men of the same name headed brokerage firms.

Designate police stations and police courts in a manner intelligible to the general public; the "19th precinct" means nothing to most persons. And it is just as well where, as in New York, street numbers usually proceed without reference to intersecting streets, to give the nearest intersecting street in addition to a street number. Few persons can tell offhand how far up town 2700 Broadway is, or at which elevated railroad station they shall alight if they wish to go to 400 Manhattan Avenue.

The stress laid upon accuracy in newspaper offices is greatly underestimated. Reporters are expected to get names, numbers, and main facts, right at all hazard, and they are reprimanded when it is found that through carelessness they have made even minor misstatements. Exaggeration is often winked at where the departure from reality can hurt no one; but no city editor will

print a story that a reporter confesses is not true. He may make it plain that he demands a magnified recital, but he does not want to be told that the demand has been recognized. Usually reporters strive to get the exact facts. Persons who find fault with the newspapers for their errors would have less to say if they spent a single day gathering news. They would find, for example, that when four persons witness an accident, each one has a different story to tell, although all are truthful and endeavor to be accurate. A reporter coming on the scene after the accident is an hour old, must accept the story that seems most plausible, and it is nothing against him if some persons who witnessed the affair declare his story wrong. How easy it is for an occurrence to be viewed in different ways is every day illustrated in the courts. Where an effort is made to place the blame for an accident or a street fight, the witnesses are generally about evenly divided.

No paper has room for an out and out liar, and it goes hard with a reporter who purposely tells a falsehood about an individual or an organization. Editors, too, are averse to offending classes, such as nationalities, and this is well proved by the growing rarity in the papers of dialect stories. By no means do the newspapers assume the intolerant attitude in which they are pictured. They are quick to listen to complaints, particularly if the persons who make them have some standing, and they are every year displaying greater readiness to make retractions. It has become pretty generally understood among intelligent persons that a newspaper can be reached through its pocket if in no other way, and in all the larger cities there is an increasing number of lawyers who busy themselves spreading the information. The man who is libeled

in these days is almost sure to have it brought to his attention that more than one lawyer is willing to undertake a suit for damages on a percentage basis. And even when he has no grounds upon which to threaten a suit for damages, the man who goes to a newspaper office to make a complaint is now sure of considerate treatment; is not discouraged by long waits or requests to call again, nor passed around from pillar to post. The following notice, prominently displayed in the reception room of the New York *World's* editorial rooms, makes clear the attitude of the editors of that publication:

"Any person calling at the office asking a correction of any publication in any edition of the *World* must be taken by the employee applied to direct to the Managing Editor or City Editor.

"Any employee violating this rule will be dismissed."

A reporter should be slow to write anything that attacks a man's character or his credit. It is all right to say that a man has been arrested when such is a fact, but it is bad policy to say or even intimate that a man is to be arrested; nor is it safe to announce that a man is guilty of a crime before his guilt has been decreed by the courts. The police do not make arrests every time they threaten to, and a man tried and found not guilty, or discharged for lack of evidence, is innocent in the eyes of the law. A reporter runs a risk even when he quotes the police as saying that a prisoner is guilty; a policeman has no license to declare sentence any more than any other individual, and a reporter can write: "it is alleged," "they say," and "it is reported" without insuring his paper in the least against a suit

for damages. These phrases so glibly slipped into newspaper stories are nothing more than sham defenses. The charge of negligence is hard to prove, and for this reason physicians are looked upon as dangerous game by newspapers; of course, they are slow to attack lawyers. It does not do to write: "Jones says that Smith is a scoundrel and a liar," unless the reporter is ready to prove the allegations in court, and it does not do to be tricky and write: "Is Smith a scoundrel?" or "We do not believe Smith is a scoundrel." To be frank, an experienced newspaper reporter who goes into the law of libel carefully, always shudders to think of the number of times he has unwittingly laid himself open to attack. It is actionable to present only one side's testimony in the report of a court trial, and a score of other things are actionable which newspapers do every day. In general, a reporter is safe if he plays fair. But he should not take it upon himself to suppress news on his own initiative because he thinks it libelous. His duty is to carry the news to his office and let the editors do the deciding.

With many young reporters the notion exists that a newspaper man is not at his best unless he is finding fault. They go out of their way to employ ridicule and sarcasm, and pride themselves on their ability to annoy and hurt. Some of them get so bad that they are always ready to stretch the truth for the sake of setting down what they think are particularly telling examples of their own smartness; and it must be confessed that occasionally experienced newspaper men who pose as fair judges are the worst offenders. Supposed to be critics they substitute "flash talk" for criticism, and deride because this gives them the best

opportunities to make telling hits. The critic who belittles everything is frequently not the keen observer that he would have it supposed; not daring to pronounce a thing good and thus, in a manner, stand sponsor for it, he censures always, hoping that those who differ with him will be suspicious that they admire because they are not entirely competent to judge. Anyone can find fault, and almost anyone can say mean things, but there are few persons who can praise without becoming fulsome and effusive. This is something that every young reporter should remember. Moreover, it is neither becoming nor brave to attack a person who cannot defend himself. The newspaper worker who prides himself on his ability to ridicule usually needs a lesson on the subject of fair play. If he is hard to impress he not infrequently gets the lesson in the courts.

On an evening paper the main force of reporters begins work at 8 o'clock in the morning. As fast as a man finishes one assignment he gets another, and this continues until the close of the day. If he gets any lunch it is because one of his assignments permits him to drop into a restaurant, as the city editor's schedule makes no allowance for hunger. Morning paper reporters are expected to reach the office between noon and 1 o'clock. Most of them get assignments without delay, and generally they get back to the office and finish their first stories by 5.30 o'clock. Those who do this then go out for dinner, returning at the end of an hour to take other assignments. Having written second stories, most of the men are allowed to go home, and generally the office is pretty well cleared a half hour before midnight.

Over their afternoon assignments morning reporters

can take their own time. They need not call their search for news closed until they feel sure that they have covered every point, and engaged in writing they are allowed to set their own pace. On evening assignments they must bestir themselves, and late at night their stories are frequently taken from them a page at a time. Evening paper reporters have to work under pressure constantly. Almost always a man has to cut his hunt for news a little short in order to get his information into the office in time for the next edition, and it is the usual thing, when he writes in the office, for a copy boy to stand at his side ready to carry off each page as fast as it is finished. Not often does an evening paper reporter get a chance to go over his story before it goes to the copy readers; an experienced man, when the opportunity does present itself, is glad to accept it.

Although they are always subject to instructions reporters have plenty of license. Indeed, the "stars," receiving very close directions, are led to believe that they have not been giving satisfaction in the fullest degree, and hark back over their performances for a week or two in efforts to ascertain wherein they have failed. The more commonplace newsgatherers do not get as much freedom as do the leaders, but not often are they more than lightly fettered. One result is that the reporters have a great deal more to say about what gets into the paper and how, and what stays out, than is generally supposed. The man who imagines that a reporter is only a messenger or an errand runner is much mistaken, and the mistake may cost him dearly if, thinking himself safe from reprisal, he goes out of his way to be ugly when he is approached by a newspaper representative. The re-

porter, first of all, if the man is anything more than a momentary consideration, can defend himself valiantly and even make a forward movement of great aggressiveness, and having good reason for feeling aggrieved, he can generally go a step further and get his editors to espouse his cause. No first-class paper asks its reporters to accept insults in silence, and few of them will fail to support their men when they are attacked.

The power a reporter may wield is particularly well illustrated by the following incident which occurred in an Eastern city: A certain professional man upon whom the reporters were occasionally forced to call, owing to interests which he represented, while angry one day over some extraneous matter, pounced upon a young reporter who happened into his office, and subjected him to an atrocious tongue-lashing. Astonished, the object of the attack, who had never seen the man before, asked wherein he had offended. The reply he received was an order to get outside the door. About a half-dozen years later the professional man announced himself as a candidate for the nomination for a high city office, and then the reporter, by this time a political writer, got the chance for which he had been waiting. He told his editor-in-chief about the attack that had been made on him, and after proving that the man had none of the qualities of a vote-getter, received permission to oppose the nomination in the paper. He repaid the debt with interest in a single article, which set the man forth as the overbearing, intolerant, domineering individual he was, and did it so skillfully that even the man's friends and supporters had to acknowledge, after reading it, that he stood no chance of election. The article put the candidate, whose prospects had until its appearance been of the best, en-

tirely out of the running, and further, it induced the party leaders to cross his name off their list of eligibles for all time.

To their credit, the battles in which reporters engage for personal reasons are exceedingly rare. Commonly, when they get the credit for performances of this kind they are only acting under orders, and fight strongly for no other reason than that they are faithful soldiers. As a rule reporters do not carry chips on their shoulders and are slow to take offense. Rebuffed when asking questions, they ask themselves what they would have done had the same questions been put to them, and make plenty of allowance for momentary losses of temper.

Frequently, though, reporters do go to some pains to be helpful. Convinced that a cause is just, they keep it before the public, and gain adherents for it by referring to it as if its merits were everywhere acknowledged. For an individual they can perform service equally valuable, and many a man who imagines that his name gets into the papers because the editors admire him, if he only knew it, is indebted to the reporters alone. It is almost an unheard-of thing for editors to tell the reporters to advance the cause of any person not firmly established in public life. The reporters must be the first to recognize worth; if they fail to see it the editors never hear of it, as they view the world through the eyes of their representatives.

What the reporters can accomplish when they try is illustrated now and then when they bring into view and uphold as a humorist and philosopher some illiterate individual who is willing to pose as something that he would like to be. The campaign usually opens with the individual meeting the reporters in a friendly

spirit, making a couple of original or timely remarks and telling the reporters to say whatever they please about him. Finding that he will "stand for it," the reporters put into his mouth all the good stories, witticisms, and jokes of which they can think. He gets the credit for all the bright sayings and slang expressions they can manufacture, and not infrequently becomes a national character. The Bowery funny men are not real. They are only paper men constructed to turn the product of the reporters' brains into space-rate money.

## CHAPTER XIII

### NEWS FROM OUTSIDE THE CITY.

THERE are in the United States at the present time very few large newspapers which collect all their telegraph news themselves ; not more than could be counted upon the fingers of one hand. The others get the bulk of their information concerning what is going on in the outside world from one or another of the great newsgathering organizations, of which there are about half a dozen operating in this country. Any one of these concerns can give a good service, but one of them which is conducted on the co-operative expense-sharing plan overshadows all the others. It maintains over 34,000 miles of leased wires, has a correspondent in every city and in almost every village in the United States, and is represented directly or indirectly, for it maintains working agreements with several foreign news agencies, in every civilized country in the world. Also it employs many special correspondents, who can be sent on short notice to any places where their presence is deemed advisable.

While the newsgathering organizations undoubtedly tend to destroy competition, all the patrons of any one of them being placed on the same general footing, they have probably more than any other agency enabled the American newspapers to become the universal reflectors they now are. So accustomed have newspaper readers become to having columns and columns of

foreign intelligence and news sent from distant parts of our own country offered to them every day, that they forget about the labor of procuring it and, except in rare instances, give no thought to its great cost. But it is not so many years since even the greatest papers printed only the extremely important foreign news, and gave very brief accounts of happenings in distant parts of the United States. There are plenty of newspaper workers who can remember the time when the appearance of a half-column long cablegram called for wide comment.

To gain an idea of the extent to which the scope of American newspapers has widened in recent years one need only compare the reports of the fighting between Russia and Japan with those printed when Japan had China for an opponent. The change is made even more apparent, for here the enemies and the fighting ground are the same in both instances, when one compares the reports that came from South Africa during the last war between the Boers and the English with those received when these foes clashed less than fifteen years before. During the last war the papers, even those of the smaller cities, told about the battles at length and frequently gave details of skirmishes. In 1886, the report of the important battle of Majuba Hill, so often referred to in the course of the second war, as presented in one of the foremost New York papers occupied just six lines. In 1878 the death of Pope Pius IX was set forth in some of the New York papers in a ten-line story, and even this came not from Rome but from London. When Pope Leo XIII died the foremost American papers printed almost a page, most of it direct from Rome. At the present time papers in the leading cities receive from

the co-operative news association about 50,000 words a day, and of this a fifth sometimes comes from abroad.

The ordinary newsgathering organizations are in effect nothing more than news retailers. Collecting the news at an enormous expense they deliver it to each subscriber at a fraction of its cost, the price, omitting the question of profit, being the first cost divided by the number of subscribers. The great co-operative organization corresponds to an exchange, so far as United States news is concerned. Each paper which is a member—there are about seven hundred of them—contributes its choice news and in return gets the gleanings of the other members and the information collected by the organization's own reporters. There are four divisions of the association, Eastern, Central, Southern, and Western with headquarters or centers in New York, Chicago, Washington, and San Francisco respectively, and within these main divisions are a number of small sub-divisions. Each paper receives all the news of its own sub-division, except that gathered by its immediate rivals, and the particularly important news of all the other divisions. The news of most small cities in which it has members the association procures at no cost except telegraph tolls, the editors or owners of the papers sending their stories that are of more than local interest to the nearest distributing office without compensation. In large cities the organization maintains salaried editors or managers, who are kept supplied with proofs from the offices of local members and thus enabled to get the news on the wires with little delay. In Washington, the state capitals, and a few of the largest cities staffs of good reporters are employed, and wherever there is a local newsgathering concern the larger organization receives its

service as does any of the subscribing newspapers. In villages the organization has correspondents who are paid for such of their contributions as get into print. One set of foreign correspondents is all that is needed. The news these foreign correspondents contribute is distributed impartially, abbreviated stories, however, being sent to the papers of small cities.

A paper which receives the service of one of the newsgathering organizations may, it can easily be seen, get along very well without having correspondents of its own. The news is poured into its office from the nearest headquarters of the organization every day, and as long as the editors are content to do without beats they need not give a thought to what may be going on in the outside world. But the largest papers are not satisfied to print only what comes from the news agencies. Each one employs two or three foreign correspondents, stations men in half a dozen or so of the leading American cities, and in addition has a great number of space-paid correspondents scattered in different parts of the country. To their special representatives the papers look for occasional beats and for detailed reports of important happenings, which accounts for the fact that a paper often prints two reports of one event; one is furnished by a news agency, the other by a special correspondent. A paper must also look to special correspondents when it desires partisan political news, for supplying papers of all faiths the newsgathering organizations remain neutral at all times.

In some cities the papers, even receiving the service of a news agency, send their staff reporters to distant places where there is momentous news to be gathered, but were the truth known it would be found that

most of them, when they dispatch their men on long and expensive expeditions, do so in self-defense. A few publications, well supplied with money, ambitious to attract attention to themselves, take the initiative, and their competitors follow the lead because they can do nothing else without losing prestige. The New York dailies would certainly have got along with fewer special correspondents during the Spanish-American war had it not been that a publication which only a short time before had passed into new hands was trying, regardless of cost, to build up its circulation. Every New York paper made expenditures that were out of all proportion to earnings during this war, and some of them sustained losses that offset the earnings of years. The leader in extravagance, it was afterward declared by its editor, was operated, while the war was at its height, at an average loss of \$300,-000 a month.

The original newsgathering concern came into existence as a result of over-keen competition, and the date of its founding proves that newspaper rivalry is by no means a new thing. There were as early as 1840 several New York papers that were spending more than \$15,000 a year each, to maintain swift-sailing vessels which, cruising about from fifty to one hundred miles outside of Sandy Hook, intercepted incoming ships and hurried the foreign newspapers and the letters from correspondents they carried ashore, and a few years later it was a common occurrence for the reporters of rival papers to race from Boston to New York on special trains with the news landed at Boston. Hoping to humble a great paper several publications once went so far as to send a fast vessel all the way across the Atlantic to procure the latest intelli-

gence for them. To some of the New York newspaper owners who were getting lots of excitement but saving little money, it occurred late in the forties that a change was advisable, and after some preliminary talk they came to an agreement that they should join forces, maintain among them only one set of men to gather the news from certain places, and divide the expense. The dominating co-operative association is the outgrowth of this agreement.

The telegraph editor—he might well be called the world editor, for, leaving out only his own city and the territory immediately surrounding it, his news field extends to the ends of the earth—who is employed on a paper which does not belong to a newsgathering organization, has, of course, a difficult place to fill, but if time enough is given him and he is experienced, he usually succeeds in building up a satisfactory newsgathering system of his own. With his machine in fine working order the foreign news reaches him automatically; the news of the leading home cities is acquired most of the time without trouble; and that of the small towns calls only for a fair amount of attention. The foreign correspondents always give good service. Stationed in the leading cities, by keeping their eyes and ears open and buying plenty of late editions, they come into possession of all the noteworthy news, and thoroughly competent, they know how to write readable stories and how to get them across the ocean quickly. Rarely does the telegraph editor find it necessary to give orders to these representatives. The correspondents in the important home cities work much as do the foreign correspondents. They forward the news they think worth forwarding without waiting to ask questions, and most of the

stories they write can be turned over to the printers just as they are received. These correspondents are held responsible for the news not only of their own cities but for that of all the nearby towns, and a few of them forward their contributions over private telegraph wires.

It may here be pointed out that owing to the difference in time between the two cities the New York morning papers, at a cost confined only to telegraph tolls, are enabled to present to their readers on the same day that it first appears all the news that is collected by their London contemporaries. When the London papers are issued the New York papers are still four hours away from the presses, and in the interval the American correspondents seize upon and transmit anything and everything that catches their fancy. The New York evening papers, too, take advantage of the difference in time, so that none is ever beaten on news published in London.

Every first-class large city daily, whatever its method of getting the news of distant places, endeavors to have a correspondent in every city and village within a radius of 150 miles of the place where it is published. These correspondents are always paid at space rates, and anxious to make their bills as large as possible a good many of them insist on supplementing their worth while stories with a lot of trash. Some of the mediocre stories do get into print, but this is because there is a dearth of real news in the office at the time they are received, or because the telegraph editor does not wish the would-be money-makers to become disgruntled and give up their places, thus putting him to the trouble of getting men to succeed them. Upon the man whose cupidity runs away with his common

sense so far that he cannot be repressed by gentle means, the telegraph editor exercises a sure restraint by notifying the telegraph companies not to forward stories which he attempts to send offhand. A correspondent against whom an order of this kind is filed is thereafter compelled to "query," that is, to send an outline of the news he has and allow the telegraph editor to decide whether it is desired. Some papers require all their space correspondents to query, but the saving that results is often dearly acquired. A saving of \$500 looks pretty small, for example, when at 12 o'clock some night a telegram is received which reads: "Catastrophe, fifty persons killed, seventy-five injured; how much." And this message is no more blind than many that reach the telegraph editor. Queries, like news articles, are always sent "collect" by the correspondents, and anyone who comes into possession of a piece of news which he thinks is not likely to be widely known is at liberty to send queries to as many papers as he desires, without fear that he will be required to pay for them. Not replying to a query, an editor means that he does not care for the story offered.

In the leading cities most of the telegraph news—the press associations in some places receive the news at their own offices and distribute it written out, either by messenger or through pneumatic tubes—is delivered to the newspaper offices over direct wires, and it is received by particularly competent operators who, interpreting the dots and dashes on typewriters, or "mills," as they call them, turn out good, clean copy that it is a pleasure to edit; almost invariably it is correctly capitalized and punctuated, and it is unusual for a sheet to be marred by a "bull," the operators' word for a blunder, or even by an erasure. The performances

of the press operators who receive legislative news and court decisions from Washington are especially wonderful in view of the fact that this news is not only sent by "fast" men, but is "coded," or abbreviated; an ordinary telegraph operator could make nothing of it. "Scotus," for example, the press receiver expands into Supreme Court of the United States, and "HR," into House of Representatives. There are hundreds of these code devices; so many that they make a good-sized volume.

Lest there be some misunderstanding, it must be explained that while a few papers maintain private wires of great length—one New York publisher has leased wires connecting his papers, which are located in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, and Boston—most papers, to adhere closely to facts, have uninterrupted connections only with the nearest headquarters of the telegraph companies. When a story is filed by a correspondent anywhere, the operator to whom the manuscript is delivered calls the nearest wire chief, who is perhaps in another town, and tells how much of a story he has. The wire chief thereupon gets into communication with the city in which the paper is located, and as soon as the newspaper has a free wire a connection is established with the operator who has the story to deliver. The moment the story is concluded the "made" wire is "broken," and another correspondent's story gets a chance at the newspaper "loop." In the largest newspaper offices there are frequently as many as a dozen telegraph operators employed.

Orders sent by telegraph editors are always to the point, usually reading something like: "Rush 500 words railroad accident." The papers get special

rates from the telegraph companies—where the charge for ordinary messages is twenty-five cents for ten words the press rate is a third of a cent a word—but the editors save a word whenever they can, and they try to make their correspondents do the same by warning them frequently of the necessity of adhering closely to facts and avoiding “fine writing.” The correspondents are not, however, expected to abbreviate or skeletonize. Even the cable telegrams of the foreign correspondents are commonly sent complete except for the omission of words like “and,” “the,” “that,” “on,” and “in,” and these are left out only where there is no possibility of the editor filling in the wrong word. During a war, code or cipher is forbidden, the censors refusing to pass it; and a message of which they are the least suspicious they always reject. If a correspondent does deceive the censors and is found out, his usefulness is at an end, and he can count himself lucky if he is allowed to start for home without undergoing a term of imprisonment. Incidentally, the stories about war correspondents filing sections of the Bible to keep rivals from getting a chance at the wires are out of date. While the rule of the cable and telegraph companies is to send messages in the order they are received, they also have another rule which says that legitimate business is not to be delayed. A war correspondent could, of course, insist that a chapter of the Bible be forwarded to his paper, but the censor would have to give his assent before the cable office would accept it, and it would not be sent until all real news was out of the way.

The hours of the telegraph editor of an evening paper are the same as those of the city editor; but in a morning paper office the telegraph editor does not

begin work until late in the afternoon or early in the evening, the managing editor looking after the queries and sending out orders previous to his arrival. Always the day is started by an inspection of the schedule prepared by the man who reads the papers, and whenever opportunity offers, the telegraph editor goes over the rival papers that are brought into the office to see whether he is missing anything. Whether he has to work hard for his news or whether it comes to him easy, the telegraph editor must be a quick and accurate copy reader, for many of the stories that reach him, particularly from small towns, are written by untrained men and need thorough revision. Usually there are only two or three men detailed to assist in reading telegraph copy, but in a few offices in the leading cities a larger force is employed, and almost all the stories, including those received from the newsgathering organizations, are rewritten.

The telegraph editor, too, must possess an exceedingly good stock of general information, and be well acquainted with his geography, for the worth of a telegram, particularly of those which come from distant places, is not always to be judged by its length. If he gets word that the Duke of Perth is dead, he ought to know just how much of an obituary should be prepared in the office and tacked to the message, and when he hears that Ping Pang Fort has fallen, he must see that the news gets into the paper equipped with an elucidation and a heading befitting its worth. In a few of the largest offices all the cable news is edited by one man, and each of the other copy readers handles the news of a certain section or certain states. Not often does a telegraph editor or any of his assistants manufacture news, or, in the vernacular, employ the

"grapevine wire." In almost all offices this practice is strictly forbidden.

Digressing for the moment from big-city journalism, mention may be made of the manner in which small-town dailies, papers which, although not rich enough to use the telegraph lines, are still ambitious to keep their readers informed and up to date, get the news of the outside world. It is forwarded to them, strange to say, by express, and not infrequently makes that stage of the journey between the railroad stations and the editorial rooms in wheelbarrows. And more odd still, it has to be edited with saws. Under the circumstances it is hardly necessary to add that the news reaches the country towns not in manuscript form, but turned into type, or to be concise, stereotype plates that are ready to be placed on the press. Plate matter is a boon to the country editor, in that it enables him to present the whole world's news while it is, if not quite fresh, yet far from stale; and because it permits him to get along with an exceedingly small force of printers. A column of cable news that only a few hours before cost some city paper thousands of dollars the country editor can, using plate matter, print in his paper almost as cheaply as he can a three "stick" local article that calls for the services of a compositor.

Establishments where plate matter is prepared are found in almost every part of the country; there is scarce a city of over 100,000 population not close to a still larger city which does not boast of one or more. The head man in each establishment is the editor. Having evening publications for his clients he starts to work early in the morning, probably before daylight, and going over the freshly issued local papers, gleans from them all the important news. Having occasion

to appropriate political articles he edits them until they are unbiased, for his patrons are of all beliefs; long articles he condenses, and stories of local happenings he changes so that they can bear date lines. Sufficient material having been prepared he sends it to the printers and has it turned into type, and after this arranges the articles in column lengths. From the type matrices are now made, and from each matrice as many plates, each a column long and a column wide, as there are papers to be supplied, are cast. After this the plates are arranged in sets, one of each kind to a set, inclosed in strong iron-bound boxes and hurried to the express offices or railroad stations. All this work takes only a few hours and the plates reach their destinations in time to be used in the evening papers. Where the customers are morning papers the same procedure is followed, only here the news is gathered from the early edition evening papers.

Of course, forwarding duplicate plates to perhaps twenty editors and operating at small expense,—the news itself costs him only the few cents required to procure copies of the city papers,—the plate-matter manufacturer is able to make his charges to each customer exceedingly low. And even the express charges are kept down. The plates, instead of being shipped “type high,” and in consequence, heavy, are before packing planed until they are each hardly an eighth of an inch thick, after which grooves are cut on their under sides so that they will fit forms that are kept, in all lengths, in the country offices. So long as he has only entire columns to fill, the country editor can make rapid progress in preparing plate matter for publication, for he has to do nothing more than slip the plates on the forms; but having to fill parts of columns (pieces

of plate matter can be distributed in a page partly filled with ordinary type) or wishing to cut out some article he must take off his coat and go to work with a saw. There are a great many country weeklies which use whole pages of plate matter, which is now procurable bearing farm notes, short stories, fashions, continued stories, sermons, editorials, and almost anything else, and where this is the case the editor's work is frequently still further reduced. He is supplied not with plates but with bundles of papers printed on one side, and to issue his paper he need only print his local news on the blank side. In offices where this practice is followed "our patent inside" is a standing joke among the printers.

Space-paid correspondents who come to understand as well as do the staff reporters and the salaried correspondents the importance of getting their news into the office early, are the ones who make the most money and stand highest in the telegraph editor's estimation. Starting his day, the telegraph editor wishes for momentous news, but news of some kind or what approaches news he must have, and for the men who come to his assistance there are rewards. A story which reaches an evening paper office at 8 o'clock in the morning is almost sure to get into print, and many which would of a certainty go into the wastebasket at noon are deemed worthy at 10 o'clock. Late in the day only exceptional stories pass inspection, and even these are pruned. It is not so easy to force contributions on a morning paper, since the telegraph editor has a good many hours in which to supply his share of material, but here, too, the early stories are most lightly judged. To the prompt correspondents also, there are often sent orders for details which mean

to them more space and more money. In passing, when a telegraph editor transmits to a correspondent who has been supplying a running story, such as a report of a court trial, a message reading "Good-night," he wishes to inform him that the last edition for the day has been placed on the press, and that he is relieved from duty; and receiving a message which reads: "30," the correspondent can interpret it into the same thing.

By taking the trouble to learn something about the style of the paper for which he writes, and informing himself concerning the kind of news it wants and the kind it does not want, the average correspondent could not only make his work bring him a much greater return than it does, but also save himself a great deal of needless labor. A few papers supply to their representatives small books of instructions, but even having studied one of these a newsgatherer must use his judgment continually, for in the newspaper business as in others, there are few rules which do not have exceptions. Almost all of the books issued, for example, say: "Do not send trivial accidents." Yet it is possible for an accident, small in itself, to be worth the attention of every paper in the country because of its peculiarity, or because of the prominence of persons concerned.

To make sure that his stories will not be delayed in transit a correspondent should always, at the end of each one, write the time of filing in the telegraph office. Knowing that he will have to send this filing-time paragraph, no operator is going to allow a story to remain in his hands a moment longer than is necessary. For the occasional country operator who will not start a story because it is time for him to go to

dinner or because it is time to close the office, there is a sure treatment. The correspondent need only write a message to the nearest superintendent of the telegraph company, reading like this: "Have thousand words ordered New York *Star*, operator refuses to send," and pass it over the counter accompanied by the money to pay for it. Invariably the operator will undergo a change of heart. A correspondent should keep account of the stories he sends, and where possible, should forward his bill in the form of a string of clippings. Always the bill should be accompanied by the orders for stories received from the paper.

Although as has been pointed out every paper has ideas of its own as to what constitutes news, there is no correspondent who will not be benefited by a careful study of the following instructions issued to its out-of-town representatives by the *New York World*:

Send facts—and nothing else. Both sides of every story. Whatever facts are calculated to interest, inform or please everybody, everywhere, are good news.

A fact which may be of vital importance in any particular locality may be insignificant for the average reader. Imagine yourself a stranger set down in the locality which you represent, and judge from that what occurrences are of interest to other strangers all over the country.

Put into your story only those facts which are of interest to everyone. Don't waste paper writing in the story matter to suit or please the person who gives you the information or others having a direct personal interest in the matter.

Events involving New York people or interests have a value in addition to their ordinary news interest

which justifies more of a story than would otherwise be sent.

Accidents, fires, floods, failures, and such ordinary happenings are usually covered by the Associated Press, and specials are needed only when the event is serious enough to be called a disaster. An early bulletin of them is appreciated, however, and may lead to an order for a special.

Casualties of every sort involving no loss of life and property damage of less than \$100,000 are not worth sending even in bulletins, unless peculiar in occasion, manner, or results, and of interest from more than their importance.

Indecent assaults, unmentionable offenses, breach of promise, abandonment, and similar cases are seldom good news. Never send them unless the circumstances are very unusual or the persons involved very conspicuous. Send them briefly and guardedly.

Divorce cases, when actually on trial, are good news if the testimony is of an unusual nature, or the parties to the suit are well known. The "cleaner" they are the more they are worth, and this applies to all scandal news.

Never send positive assertions unless you have the absolute proof of their correctness ready for production at a moment's notice. The English language is rich in words of qualification.

Never send interviews with a "well-known citizen," "one in a position to know," "a prominent official," or any other of the array of voluble but anonymous individuals.

Do not, to enhance the supposed value of a story, speak of people as "prominent," "well known," "wealthy," or "beautiful" unless they really are so.

Don't send speeches, political interviews, reports of committees or boards, or similar things, except when specially ordered.

News received after midnight stands little chance of being printed, but brief dispatches, if important enough, are available as late as 1 A. M., and bulletins of very important news up to 2 A. M. After that nothing goes unless it is of the utmost importance. This means New York time, and the hour of receipt not the sending hour.

Send queries at any hour day or night. File news dispatches at the earliest possible moment, morning, afternoon, or evening. When filing before 6 P. M. mark across the top of the first page, "Send after 6 P. M." This because dispatches may be filed at any time during the day and are sent in the order received, but if sent before 6 P. M. may be charged double rates by the telegraph company.

Send by telegraph, except matter the interest of which is as great at one time as another, and which no other newspaper is likely to get. The mails will do for that and for special stories for Sunday or other than regular news editions.

On small matters and any time after 9 P. M., New York time, make your query a brief summary of the news, sending names and essential facts, clearly and concisely, thus:

"North-bound passenger No. 4 Pennsylvania collided with freight, Jamestown Station, to-night. James Smith, engineer, killed; passenger fireman and three of freight crew injured, fireman fatally. Passengers all right. Wrong signal. 200?"

This can be rewritten in the office into a special covering the news if more is not wanted or it is too late to order, and if so you will be paid for it as for a special.

Do not exaggerate your news in queries. It will be detected at once and all your queries thereafter will be subjected to a discount that will work to your disadvantage. State clearly and simply the exact facts as to the news you offer.

Do not be secretive about your queries. State plainly what your news is. A blind query will almost invariably lead to a small order, when the story may be worth much more.

Be careful to write plainly. Telegraph operators can read hen tracks, but not always correctly.

Keep friendly with the telegraph operators if possible. They can do you a great many favors if they wish to. Treat them fairly and don't expect impossibilities.

Remember that the long distance telephone is always available. Use it when the telegraph wires fail or are overcrowded.

Your appointment as representative does not mean that news will be received from no one else in your locality. News will be taken from any reliable source, and if you neglect to query us on any news in your vicinity, or if your query is very much later than one sent in from some independent source, the news will be ordered from someone else. The only way in which you can insure exclusive possession of your field is by showing us by your work that we may rely upon you absolutely for early and good stories of events in your vicinity.

The co-operative newsgathering association, to which reference has been made, occupies such a prominent place in newspaper affairs that a few words more about its organization and operation will not be amiss. It is organized more like a club than an every-day business venture, and admission to membership is decided in any city by the members there existing. The result of this is that in most places papers outside the fold stay there unless they buy out existing memberships or "franchises." The last membership that changed hands in New York cost the purchaser about \$100,000—more rather than less—and along with it went only some worn-out, antiquated presses, a few hundred dollars' worth of printing machinery and office furniture, and the good will of a paper whose readers were so few that they did not count. On the surface the purchase money was paid for a newspaper; in reality it was paid for the paper's membership in the newsgathering association. As soon as the money was paid in this instance the purchased publication was absorbed by the paper which desired its membership, and the transaction was completed as intended. In New York at the present time a new membership in the association is not procurable at any price, and there is no existing membership for sale at bargain rates. A membership confers privileges on one paper only, so where a morning and an evening edition are issued from one establishment two "franchises" are necessary to get the association's complete service. Morning and evening memberships, moreover, are distinct, which precludes a morning member changing to an evening member, and *vice versa*. The association's co-operative plan of operation, of course, eliminates the possibility of profits or dividends. The ex-

penses, amounting to about \$2,000,000 a year, are divided equitably, the amount any member pays being based on the population within a given radius of the place of publication and the cost of maintaining the special wires the service requires.

## CHAPTER XIV

### PREPARING FOR JOURNALISM

OF education a newspaper worker, either editor or reporter, cannot have too much as long as he is not through it made pedantic and intolerant. A fair education, whether it has been acquired in the classroom or through the hardest kind of work with none other than himself as a teacher, he must have. All the subjects taught in the elementary schools prove useful, and for any position a pretty thorough knowledge of English grammar, American history, the elements of civil government, geography, and elementary arithmetic are next to necessary. An occasional reporter can manage to get along without knowing much about some of these things, but this is only because he is associated in his office with men who can tide him over when he gets stuck. Not often are the higher mathematics employed in newspaper work. But the training their study gives is far-reaching; when it is known that a man excels in mathematics the chances always are that he is above the ordinary in other branches of learning. Some of the editors and reporters who understand Latin and Greek say that the knowledge helps them frequently. The ones who know nothing about either say that if their ignorance handicaps them the handicap is so light that they never feel it. Both sides, though, unite in declaring that an acquaintance with Latin and Greek certainly does not

impede anyone's progress. Every accomplishment helps in a newspaper office.

There was a time when newspaper editors looked askance at college graduates, but conditions have changed. In large cities college men now get the preference, and in the length of Park Row, in New York, can be found scattering representatives of almost every university in the world, and small college graduates by the score. A college education will not give a man more brains than nature set aside for him, but it will add something to the value of the existing supply, for no man, however dense he is, can have things explained to him every day for three or four years by professors qualified to explain without benefiting. Denying this, one would also have to deny that a young man, whom a successful merchant took the trouble to instruct, counsel, and advise daily for a like period, would come to know some valuable truths about business. Going to college, moreover, a man is compelled to study, and must perform set tasks daily. The man who does not go may study and may work regularly; but again he may not. For the most part, the persons who talk the loudest about the harm colleges do make no distinction between college graduates and men who have gone to college, and giving illustrations of their contentions, point out individuals who were dismissed from college for the very reasons that continue to render them objectionable. The colleges, particularly the larger ones, conduct a thorough weeding out process, and by no means every starter finishes.

While a college education is desirable, it is for newspaper work far from essential. Every large paper has on its staff excellent reporters and copy readers who never saw the inside of a college building, and in the

same class are a few of the highest paid editors. Some of these men began as office boys, others became reporters after having served apprenticeships at the printer's case. But the men who rise in daily journalism, after starting handicapped by the lack of an education, are in every instance found to possess in a high degree that important qualification for success—mental alertness. And those who reach the big prizes possess, also, a rare quality, commonly known as executive ability, which far overshadows education and mere brains in the opinion of most men who have won success.

For the young man who is entering college with the intention of fitting himself for journalism there is a great wealth of subjects from which to choose; but the task of making a selection which will bring the greatest return is a hard one. In some of the largest institutions about seventy years would be required to complete all the courses offered. Editors agree that a broad, liberal education is best for the would-be newspaper man. But there are not many of them who do more than generalize when they are asked to tell just what a broad, liberal education is. Nor are college professors as clear as they might be. The person would be presumptuous indeed, under these circumstances, who would dare say: "These are the subjects which should be studied by the young man who intends to engage in journalism." But it cannot be taken amiss if a few are named which return good value for the time given them.

English comes first. No matter how much else a man knows he is debarred from any except the lowest places if he cannot write good English. There are some men occupying high positions who learned how

to write in newspaper offices, but they got the chance to learn only because they early proved themselves keen observers and excellent newsgatherers. It is not safe for an average man to count on learning after starting to work. Editors and copy readers are willing to give a beginner points on newspaper style, but they object to teaching grammar, and they will do it only when wonderful results are promised.

United States history, taught by a man who knows the subject, is also worth a good lot of the student's time. For one thing, it will save him from becoming a calamity howler and a forecaster of national ruin. The newspaper writers who are continually talking about the good old times and declaring that the country is going to destruction would be more cheerful if they knew as much about their country's history as they should.

Logic is another subject that can be taken up profitably by the prospective newspaper worker. Leaving names aside, the man who studies elementary logic gets little that he might not get bit by bit through experience, but this does not weigh against logic as a definite study. If a man can have a thing explained to him in detail in lessons extending over a few months, he is certainly foolish to allow the opportunity to go by because he thinks he will be able to accumulate the same information by simply living. He may not, in the first place, live long enough to accumulate it all, and secondly there is only the probability that he will get it, not the certainty. Elementary logic is worth while to the student if it makes plain to him nothing more than the fact that a thing either is or is not. Grasping this truth he will save himself a lot of trouble and incidentally be able to see through a lot of shams.

which he is sure to encounter. Realizing, too, that a thing is either true or is not true, he will not distort, exaggerate, or misrepresent with the mistaken idea that he is really not lying but only presenting the case as viewed from one side.

Another subject that can be pursued to advantage is political economy, which helps a man to come to a decision when a thousand questions arise. It does not make him infallible, but it does militate against mere passiveness. Having studied political economy intelligently a man is led to think even if he does draw wrong conclusions, and the probabilities are that he will be right much oftener than he will be wrong.

A knowledge of finance, which is now taught in all the large universities, may prove extremely valuable to a newspaper worker. Not many young men enter a newspaper office qualified to handle news of the stock markets, banks, crop reports, loans and discounts, railroad earnings, bond issues, "corners," panics, and failures, and a city editor always congratulates himself when he finds that he has one on his staff. He is pleased, too, to learn that one of his young men knows what a bank statement is, and can explain it and the message it contains in words that the average newspaper reader can understand.

Most old-time newspaper editors shy at the word psychology, but the one who has studied psychology will probably acknowledge that it has benefited him. With sociology it is the same. A lot of fun is poked at this study, but it is healthy enough to stand it. It presents a set of statistics that widens anyone's horizon, and it sheds light on a lot of topics that are often discussed without much understanding.

For a newspaper artist an education along general lines can be either a possession or a want, without anyone being much the wiser except those who come into close contact with him, but if he is to be other than a plodder he must have in him the qualities so necessary for the other workers, those which enable a man to see news when it exists and to pick out its most dramatic points.

Ambitious to become a newspaper artist and thinking that he has in him the essentials, a young man should, if possible, place himself under a competent instructor, which may save him from acquiring faults of which he cannot later rid himself, and he should practice continually. Having acquired enough skill to make pictures of his friends and his every-day surroundings, the student should try his hand at street scenes, the groups gathered in front of bulletin boards and around the push-cart merchants, and from this he can move on to the scenes of fires and accidents. Reaching the point where he is pretty sure that he is qualified to go to work for a salary, he should visit courtrooms where trials that are attracting wide attention are in progress. Here, while making pictures of his own, he will get a chance to see journeymen newspaper artists at work, and, proceeding circumspectly, will be able during recesses to make their acquaintance, or at least to have them look at his drawings. If they think his work is up to the mark they will probably, their opinions having been solicited, say so and perhaps point out where improvement may be made. If they are reluctant to make comments the novice should not press them, for they are not unlikely keeping quiet through kindness. Having praised a beginner's work, the newspaper artists will, if there

is time to spare and the man strikes their fancy, tell him how to go about learning how pictures are made ready for printing, tell him where he might find employment, and perhaps promise to speak a word for him where it will count. In New York the artists, like the reporters, are kindness itself to beginners; in view of the vicissitudes of the newspaper business their conduct in this line is remarkable.

Able to make pictures worth printing, but not finding a situation, the novice may turn his talent to account, and perhaps place himself in the way of steady employment by contributing to the Sunday papers, and if he is not much of a writer himself he need only visit the places where reporters are stationed to watch for news, to find plenty of men who will be willing to collaborate with him, furnish the writing while he furnishes the illustrations. Another market for his pictures may be found among the syndicates, concerns which, purchasing special material of every kind, sell it to papers all over the country. The same story is sold to perhaps twenty papers, but it is arranged that all shall publish it on the same day. The syndicates buy short stories, jokes, continued stories, a little poetry, in brief, anything that is worth printing, and generally they pay good prices. They are not, however, in very high favor with special article writers, for by supplying Sunday papers with material they reduce the authors' market. In medium-sized cities many Sunday papers now purchase almost everything they use from the syndicates.

Best paid of all the artists are the cartoonists. Which is equivalent to saying that not many artists can make cartoons. If it is harder to make a sketch of a crowded courtroom than it is to make a copy of such

a sketch, so it is many times more difficult to make a drawing where, after evolving the idea itself, the artist must proceed without any other guide than his own brain creations. For a beginner to become a cartoonist at a jump is next to impossible. But it is not an unheard-of performance for a man to become one, at least to the extent that he is employed to make "comics," after only a few months' service. Every now and then, in the largest cities, some young man who, combining a nimble pencil with a keen wit, can make pictures dealing with current topics which will produce laughs, is taken out of the ranks of the news artists almost before he has become accustomed to his surroundings and launched as a "feature" on his paper's bill board advertisements. Real high-class cartoonists, however, are rarely found to be youthful prodigies. Almost invariably they are trained artists whose keenness of perception and acquaintance with the world put them in the class occupied by the highest editors. The ability to draw is only one of the skilled cartoonist's qualifications, and it may easily be a second to that one upon which his reputation actually rests.

Starting a picture the newspaper artist first uses a pencil, and the sketch is made about twice the size it is intended it shall be when it appears in the paper. The picture complete in pencil, the artist, to make it ready for the plate-makers—mechanical workers whose processes do not concern him—need only go over it in ink or wash, a color which is laid on with a small brush. In these days there is no call in newspaper offices for engravers. All plates are made by photographic processes; even the chalk plate, deemed a wonderful time and money saver ten years ago, is now out of date.

Many of the news pictures now printed are made from photographs instead of drawings, and as a result the photographer has become as much a fixture in journalism as the reporter and the artist. And the newspaper photographers are experts; men who know a great deal more than how to point a camera and press a button. This leads to the explanation that the camera, despite the changes it has brought about in newspaper illustrating, has not accomplished all that was promised for it a few years ago when the artists were beginning to fear that there would soon be no demand for their services. Cuts can be made from good photographic prints just as they leave the photographer's hands, but if best results are to be obtained, the pictures must be gone over by artists. Outlines have to be strengthened by ink lines skillfully placed, shadows have to be taken out, and, frequently, backgrounds must be strengthened or obliterated. Fancy borders, too, are often added. For a poor photograph the services of an artist are not only desirable but requisite.

The rapidity with which pictures are prepared for publication in well-equipped newspaper offices is almost past belief. Cuts are every day made from line drawings and finished photographs in thirty minutes, and in an establishment where every facility for rapid work is afforded, "rush" news pictures are sometimes printed in the paper only an hour after the moment when the exposed photographic plate, still in the camera, was by the out-of-breath photographer delivered at the door of the art department.

To the reporter who is paid according to his output, knowledge is not only power—it is equivalent to ready money. Every scrap of information that comes his

way he turns to account. If he finds a crowd of children playing a new game in the street he gets one of them to explain it to him, and the next time he has to wait in the office for an assignment, puts the explanation on paper, dressing it up so that it will make interesting reading; and he makes use of all the fresh anecdotes he hears in the same way. The progressive space man is rarely idle, even on his day of rest. It becomes second nature for him to pick up odds and ends that may be turned into cash, and many times the readers of his Sunday paper learn what he has dreamed although not realizing that they are reading dreams.

Surprisingly few newspaper workers are able to write shorthand, and a great many contend that they are glad the accomplishment is beyond them. Short-hand, they say, tends to make a man a mere machine which, intent on getting words, misses expression and meaning. There is some truth in this. Taking rapid dictation, a stenographer writes almost automatically, and gives no thought to anything else than his writing; the more receptive he can make himself the better is he pleased. A newspaper reporter, on the other hand, must keep his wits about him and use his eyes as well as his ears, for he is always expected to get a complete picture rather than a detailed part of one. Most interviews which appear in the papers would read far less smoothly were they accurate reports, for almost every person talking at length, without preparation, proceeds in a roundabout way, repeats, goes back to qualify, returns to one subject after having left it to deal with another, and uses colloquialisms and interjections which he would not care to see in print. The skillful interviewer allows the repetitions to go in one

ear and out the other, and forgets the unimportant words as fast as they are uttered. But he is quick to catch odd expressions, mannerisms, and gestures; and adroitly now and then he puts in a word or a question, and without making it apparent, leads the conversation where he desires it to go. Later, when he is putting the interview on paper, he takes up the subjects touched on in the order of their news value, regardless of where they came in the talk.

Should he be sent to report a public meeting, a reporter does not tremble over his inability to write shorthand. On his arrival, he seeks out the man who is to deliver the principal speech, and getting him to one side, asks for a copy of it. Usually it is forthcoming, typewritten, in which case, while the audience is later being dazzled by the speaker's "impromptu" brilliancy, the reporter prunes the speech to fit his space apportionment. Having procured one or two good speeches, the reporter puts the other orators in the "also spoke" class, unless they say something that he dares not allow to pass unnoticed. If, however, the reporter fails to get copies of speeches in advance, he follows them when they are delivered, writing the gist of them as rapidly as he can in longhand. He does not take notes, but instead writes a running story that can be sent to his office in sections.

Long speeches, such as those delivered at political conventions are, if copies are not to be procured in advance, taken by corps of skilled and experienced stenographers. Days before the time set for the meeting, several papers acting jointly make arrangements with the proprietor of some stenographic and type-writing office for the reporting of the speeches. The opening of the meeting finds this man on hand with

perhaps a half-dozen stenographers, and ten minutes after a speaker sits down the end of his address is on its way to the newspaper offices. While the stenographers are looking after the talkers, the newspaper reporters, sitting near by, write stories telling of the crowd, the prominent persons present, the speakers' appearance and their gestures, the effect the addresses have on the audience, the decorations, the music, and whatever else strikes them as worth making known.

Copies of messages of the President and the Governors are always given to the large newspapers printed and inclosed in sealed envelopes several days before the time set for their delivery. On the morning of the day on which a message is to be read, the editor-in-chief or the managing editor, to whom a paper's copy is intrusted, breaks the seal and has the document sent to the printers, over whom, for the time, strict watch is kept, and a paper containing the message is issued as soon as possible after word comes by telegraph that the reading of the message has begun.

Reporters, it can be seen, are not necessarily short-hand writers. But it is going too far to say that short-hand is a detriment. The reporters who speak against it mean, rather than this, that the man who allows it to become a crutch instead of a tool is sure to suffer, and they might add that decrying shorthand, they are taking it for granted that all newsgatherers have excellent memories. The reporter who, while using shorthand, depends upon notes no more than do other reporters who write longhand only, saves himself much labor every day, and occasionally the ability to take dictation does him excellent service, as is the case when he encounters someone, who, while willing to talk for publication, hesitates because he fears he will

not be correctly quoted. And it might here be mentioned that partly because they do not think it necessary to advertise their calling wherever they go, and partly through custom, journeymen reporters in the largest cities do not carry notebooks. The brief memorandums they take are written on pads formed by folding several sheets of copy paper together, or on the margins of folded newspapers. Not wishing to bring smiles to the faces of the long-service men, beginners will conform to the custom.

Editors once imagined that articles written on the typewriter were necessarily stilted and devoid of life, but most of them are now heartily in favor of the machines. In the offices of all evening papers which print numerous editions, the inside workers who do rewriting and write stories telephoned in, are required to use them, and the number of offices where all the reporters have to use them is constantly growing. In a few cities it is taken for granted, when a reporter says that he is qualified to do general work, that he is a typewriter operator. Newspaper workers, both rewriters and reporters, once they become accustomed to machines, feel it a hardship when they have to fall back on pencils or pens. They can more than double their speed with machines, and they contend that if there is any difference their typewritten stories are the better; as they are able, putting down the words more rapidly, to establish a closer relation between the brain and the hand. Copy readers are unanimously in favor of typewritten stories, for handling them, they are not compelled to decipher words, while the wide spaces between the lines leave room for easy interlineation. In New York a great many morning paper reporters when they have a three or four

column story on hand, go to one of the type-writing bureaus, of which there are a number in the vicinity of Park Row, and dictate to an operator who writes direct on the typewriter.

The place in which to learn the newspaper business is a newspaper office. But this does not mean that part of it could not be learned elsewhere. It means only that there is in existence no well-equipped school which teaches journalism. Undoubtedly, the elements of newspaper work might be taught as successfully as are the elements of law, medicine, or anything else. A school could not turn out finished editors, editorial writers, or first-class reporters, but it could fit men to make a good start at the bottom, with better than the ordinary prospect of advancement. Nothing more should be expected of it. A law school is not condemned because it does not produce skilled lawyers and judges, and no one scoffs at a school of medicine because it does not turn out past-master specialists. But newspaper workers never tire of making fun of mythical schools of journalism. Journalism, they intimate, is the one thing that cannot be taught in school. Everything else may be. But journalism, never! In much the same spirit the men engaged in the composing rooms insisted until a few years ago that while machinery could supplant every other manual worker, it could never oust the type-setter.

Entering a school where experienced editors and reporters would teach him how a newspaper office is organized, how news is collected and handled, give him assignments such as he would get in actual work; and point out his mistakes and show him how to get around them, a young man would certainly stand a better chance of learning the groundwork of

the newspaper business than he would were he placed in a newspaper office and left to struggle alone. Of course, though, the successful school of journalism could not make a competent newspaper man out of everyone who came to hand. But sifting out half the beginners, it would still have the right to stand as a good teacher, for the newspapers get a very small percentage of their beginners past the novice class. Where teaching is concerned, the newspapers are not wonderful successes. Their methods are those of the amateur swimming masters who throw their pupils into deep water at the first lesson, and discard those who cannot get ashore unaided.

## CHAPTER XV

### GETTING A SITUATION

The best course for a man who wishes to get a place on the staff of a newspaper to pursue, is to go to a newspaper office and ask for employment. Sometimes the managing editor or his assistant does the hiring, usually the city editor; the boy who is found guarding the entrance to the editorial rooms may be depended upon to give correct information on this score, for he is called on repeatedly every day to exercise his knowledge on the subject.

For the inexperienced man there is only one place open. The stories told of young men who, fresh from college, are employed as book reviewers, or editors in this or that department, and those which represent them as getting places which permit them to do whatever work they please, when and where they please, are all nonsense. In the same category are the tales that picture beginners as starting to work at salaries which permit them to furnish apartments, eat in first-class restaurants, ride in cabs, and go to the theater whenever they feel like it. The beginner starts as a reporter; his work, little more at first than errand running, is laid out for him; his hours are long, and he receives for his services only enough to live on, practicing strict economy. In New York (conditions are different in some other cities) there are no perquisites which go with a situation on a newspaper.

Neither editors nor reporters are allowed to apply for street railway passes, and they get no free tickets to the theaters. Usually, when a reporter asks a theatrical manager for passes, the manager writes a letter to the managing editor, and the reporter gets a warning, and offending a second time, is dismissed. The dramatic critics all receive two tickets for each first night performance, but they regard tickets they cannot use as personal possessions and commonly bestow them upon friends outside of the office. In New York a newspaper man's labor brings him only what his salary will purchase.

Few editors will refuse to see a man who desires employment if there are vacancies on their staffs, and many make it a rule to talk with every applicant, even if their forces are already larger than need be. Getting an audience, however, is not getting a situation. The office of a daily newspaper in a large city is visited every day by three or four men—in New York the number sometimes goes as high as ten—who wish work, so of necessity a large majority of the visitors are told that there are no openings. So great is the likelihood that he will be turned away from the office which he first visits, that the man who is about to search for employment will, if he is wise, before starting his quest, make a list of the papers; placing them in the order in which they appeal to him. Failing in one office, he can then go to the one that comes second on his schedule without wasting time wondering what he shall do next.

That an applicant for a place on the staff of a big newspaper has had no experience is not an unsurmountable obstacle. Most editors prefer to engage trained workers who have demonstrated their worth,

but some of them choose to take men of no experience and train them as they think they should be trained. Certain it is that an editor would rather employ a man of no experience than one who, having spent some months or years in newspaper work, had only proved that little could be expected of him. In offices where beginners are not tolerated the ranks are kept filled by men who have served apprenticeships in small cities.

While all the year around the newspaper offices are besieged by persons who are in search of employment, there are two seasons at which the number of applicants greatly increases. One of these is the early summer, which marks the closing of colleges and high schools, and the majority of the applicants are, as might be expected, graduates of different institutions who have had no experience. Most of those just out of college, having in mind stories about the ridiculous self-importance of the newly-fledged graduates, are less assertive than men of their age whose schoolroom education has not been carried so far; but a few furnish material for editorial room laughter by making it plain that they feel themselves equal to any place that may be open.

A man could not select a worse time than early summer to apply for a situation in a newspaper office, for then the dullest season of the whole year, a period that is marked by a decrease in the amount of news, and fully as important, a decrease in the amount of advertising, is at hand. Lawmaking bodies and the higher courts do not hold sessions during the heated months, and because the courts and lawmaking bodies have adjourned, many lawyers and politicians, to whom the reporters ordinarily look for information of many kinds every day, betake themselves to places where

they cannot be easily reached. Then, too, a great many other city residents spend the summer out of town, and under normal conditions, the fewer people the less news, and the less the advertising. And, automatically, at this season, when there is less work for reporters, and when the receipts from advertising fall off, thus causing publishers to think of lowering expenses, the number of newsgatherers who report for service in the office increases, for after the adjournment of the lawmaking bodies and courts, part of the men who report their proceedings are transferred into the ranks of the general workers and kept there until they are called back to their special fields.

In spite of all this the men who apply for places in the summer need not be without hope. Every employee on the big city dailies gets a two weeks' vacation during the hot months, and with a few workers away there is always a possibility that an increase in the day's news will induce an editor to employ a new man, if only to tide over an emergency. And seeing possibilities in a man engaged temporarily, most editors will retain him even if his services will not be of much value immediately.

In the fall there is another increase in the number of seekers after employment, because high school and college graduates, having enjoyed their last long vacation, are ready to start to work. By this time part of the men engaged earlier in the year, and some of the more experienced workers, have dropped by the wayside, so with the busy season, the winter, close at hand, there is in many offices room for new material.

One not acquainted with newspaper work might be inclined to think that the time would come when a paper's staff would be so arranged that there would be

no vacancies and no desire to make changes. This state of perfection, it might be said, is often reached in a bank or in a mercantile house. Where banks and mercantile houses are concerned this may be true, but different conditions obtain in newspaper offices. No large paper's staff is ever so organized that there is no desire for, or likelihood of change. There is a constant unrest, an unending moving about in the newspaper business, and there is no reason to believe that it will ever be any different. In New York during the past five years there has, so men of long experience say, been more changing than ever before.

One reason why a paper's staff does not remain the same for long periods is that many men abandon journalism after a few years' service, having taken it up merely with the idea of gaining experience through contact with persons in different walks of life, and with no intention of making it a life work. No editor will knowingly engage a man who contemplates doing this, and there are a few offices which have room for no one who will not sign a statement saying that he has nothing else than a newspaper career in mind. Other reporters and editors give up their work because, coming in contact with business men and politicians, they have offered to them places which promise greater pecuniary returns. Many others abandon journalism because, while having no particular employment in view, they realize that possessing only ordinary ability they cannot hope to gain one of the great prizes. Still others, and in this class are included some of the best newspaper workers, meeting with success as writers of magazine articles, leave to devote themselves exclusively to work of this nature.

In the classes mentioned are included most of those

who, of their own free will, leave the ranks of the newspaper workers. Together they form a mere fraction of the number who are forced to turn to something else. Some of those who leave of necessity are obliged to do so on account of ill health. Always there are long hours for both morning and evening newspaper men, and those employed on morning papers have to do most of their work at night, which sooner or later has an ill effect; constant work by artificial light hurts the eyes, the night air is bad for even strong lungs, and in a city it is almost impossible to get undisturbed sleep in the daytime. Then, reporters flocking to accidents and fires, are exposed to dangers not encountered by everyone, and eating at irregular hours and in all sorts of restaurants is not conducive to good health.

And long hours, lack of sleep, and poor food hastily eaten, have for strong allies worry and nervous strain. Remembering the number of persons applying for employment at their offices every week, newspaper workers, if for no other reason, always bear in mind that their holds on their places are not very strong. Some reach the point where they do not knowingly allow this to bother them, but there is no reporter who is not aware that every time he goes out on an assignment, he runs a risk of putting himself in disfavor with the editor by whose grace he keeps his place, and no editor who does not realize that each article that passes through his hands may prove his undoing.

Numbering more than those workers voluntarily making a change and those compelled to give up by ill health, are the ones who are dismissed for general inefficiency, poor work on a particular story, or because of bad habits.

Once a year, usually in the early summer, city newspapers have a house-cleaning, when all the reporters who have failed to prove their worth are dismissed; and a few papers at this time allow competent workers to go temporarily for the purpose of curtailing expenses. For the most part the workers who go on the occasion of a house-cleaning are men who were taken on after the preceding one. At least a third of those who enter the reporters' ranks drop out within a year, and of those who survive the first year a goodly proportion go before they have served two years. Having been in an office three years a man is pretty safe, as long as he keeps up his general standard and avoids a bad defeat.

Not often does a letter written to an editor by an inexperienced man who is unknown to him, result in the writer getting a situation forthwith. Pleased with the letter, the editor may intimate that he would grant an interview, but he rarely commits himself. The reporters represent the paper so far as the general public is concerned, and the editor does not like to run the risk of engaging a man who, for one reason or another, would not be looked upon with favor either in the office or out of it. Many editors will not make any other than a perfunctory reply to a written application for employment, for with so many men applying in person unsuccessfully, they do not feel justified in even hinting that a personal interview might result in the applicant getting a place. The would-be reporter who does write asking for a situation should by all means, if he intends to be fair to himself and to the person to whom he writes, give a description of himself, and with it send his photograph. His letter should, of course, tell about his training and his edu-

cation. Letters of recommendation written by college professors are read with care, for the editor knows that these men are unlike some others in that they are generally adroit enough to evade writing recommendations for persons they do not wish to recommend.

If the editor is impressed by a caller, but not enough to lead him to engage him offhand, he may tell him to write something and submit it. No subject will be mentioned, because the editor desires to learn not alone how the would-be reporter can write, but also what ability he has to see things about which to write. The man who is requested to submit an article can leave the office in a pleasant frame of mind, for not many are thus honored. If the article that is forthcoming is bright and entertaining, and written in good English, the editor is glad of it, for it disappoints him to find that he was mistaken when he judged his visitor. The article need not be a masterpiece, and it need not be brilliant. If it is simply good and shows that the writer is observing and can express himself clearly, the probabilities are that there will be an addition made to the paper's staff.

After a man who wishes to become a reporter has paid four or five visits to the different offices without receiving encouragement, it is time for him, if he is still sure that he can succeed in journalism and that all that he wants is a chance, to submit something without receiving an invitation. In fact, if he is absolutely sure that he is a good writer, and is willing to risk a decisive action, he might as well submit an article at the outset, and thus make the editor acquainted immediately with his ability.

But originality, while it is desirable in a solicited contribution is a necessity in one not solicited. If pos-

sible, a subject should be selected concerning which nothing has been printed. If none of this description presents itself, an old one may be taken and treated in a manner not before attempted, at least so far as the writer knows.

While he is casting about for a subject, and while he is preparing his article, the beginner must remember that his work is intended not for a magazine, but for a newspaper, and that a daily publication desires first news, and after that what closely approaches news. An article that demands space in a paper, such as a report of a fire or an accident, is real news, while another that is not news in itself, closely approaches news when it is timely. A story having to do with the manufacture and sale of fireworks would receive no consideration from a newspaper editor in the winter; but it might be accepted gratefully if offered to him a few weeks before the Fourth of July.

A story may here be told of the experience of one young man who got a place in New York at a time when he had about given up hope. While walking along a downtown street he came across a crowd standing in front of a building in which there was a fire. Knowing that the regular reporters would soon appear, he had no thought of writing about the fire, and was looking on with the eyes of an ordinary spectator, when there was a small explosion in the interior of the building. The firemen came pouring out shouting for everyone to run, and the young man was turning with others in the crowd when there came another explosion, that wrecked the building and showered débris in the streets around. Many of the sight-seers were knocked down—the young man was sent tumbling—and a panic followed in which many already

disabled were trampled upon. The young man fled with the others, but he took mental note of the injured persons he passed, and of the appearance of the streets and the terrorized crowd, and never stopped moving until he reached the office of the evening newspaper on which he was most desirous of getting work. When he told of his experience he was invited to write about it, and the column article that he wrote was worth reading. The main story of the fire and the explosion he did not attempt—that he left for the regular reporters—but he told how he felt when he was running and how the injured, crying for help, were left to fare as best they could. He told, also, how men fought one another as they fled, and how here and there a falling brick sent one headlong. Before his story appeared in the paper the young man got the place he was after, the managing editor having passed on his work while reading the proofs.

Sometimes an editor, not having a vacancy in his office, will allow a man who wants a situation to do space work for him. In this case the newcomer visits the office every day at the time the assignments are given out, and if there are more assignments than there are reporters, gets something to do. The regular reporters get the important assignments, of course, and the extra space man gets at most something that has little promise. What he writes is paid for according to the space it covers. In New York, the extra space man who makes \$10 a week can consider himself lucky. An extra space man, however, is in line for regular employment, and his income is more sure than is that of a free-lance, as a reporter who is not regularly employed but sells his information wherever he can, is called. Because of this, a free-lance, finding

that a certain publication prints his articles pretty regularly, will do well to ask the editor to allow him to do extra space work, and if his request is granted he has reason to feel pleased. Thereafter he has a general over him, and can look forward to the next house-cleaning with more than ordinary interest.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PRIZES IN JOURNALISM

FOR any man who possesses a good supply of common sense, a fair education, good health, and a liking and capacity for hard work, a newspaper office offers many advantages as a place in which to earn a living; a self-supporting wage is offered even at the start, the work is pleasant, there is an absence of humdrum, and promotion is rapid for those who deserve it. In very few other places is it harder for a man, no matter how able, energetic, and well-qualified he is, to become wealthy. The small and medium-sized prizes in the newspaper business are multitudinous. The big prizes are few. But there is no limit to the rewards which are to be gained through journalism. It leads to anything and everything. As a means toward an end it cannot be surpassed.

But journalism, like many other fields, is greenest when viewed from a distance. Newspaper workers are notorious croakers. Almost always, when a group of them get together and time hangs heavily on their hands, they begin to tell one another their troubles and wish they had gone in for something else, and generally the most insistent wishers are those who have seen the longest service. Even the men who have pushed to the front rank are frequently dissatisfied, for having made a way for themselves against one set of competitors, they feel that they could have outdis-

tanced those engaged in other pursuits just as well and have won greater rewards than are to be found in the newspaper offices. Few of the malcontents, however, have anything in particular in mind to which they would like to transfer their activities, and commonly they supplement their hopes by doing nothing more than waiting for something to turn up. Losing his place, the most persistent grumbler usually forgets all about his desire to try something else and at once sets about trying to find new employment in another newspaper office; and of the experienced men who do of their free will forsake newspaper work, a large proportion sooner or later drift back into it. The fascination it exerts is hard to shake off.

That newspaper workers are prone to grumble and decry their occupation is undoubtedly in part due to the fact that the pursuit of news bringing them into daily contact with men who have won more than ordinary standing, they are inclined to think only of these, and commiserate themselves while overlooking the crowd in which, for all they know, there are many who although as well fitted to succeed as themselves, are far worse off. Whatever the cause, newspaper workers are a dissatisfied lot. To the young man who asks them whether they would advise him to go in for journalism, they almost unanimously shout, "No, don't!" and asked to give reasons for their attitude they proceed to make out what to them appears to be a pretty strong case. They say that their ranks are overcrowded, and touching on this point they invariably compare themselves with members of the professions; that for them, experience does not count; that old age destroys their usefulness; that fame is out of their reach; that they cannot hope to become newspaper

owners; that long service in itself brings them no rewards; that their fortunes do not advance with those of their papers; and that beginners are proportionately the best paid.

Having already pointed out some of the delights of journalism and told how a newspaper is made, it is only right that something should be said about these drawbacks. It would not be fair to omit them, and further, any man who goes in for newspaper work is sure to have them called to his attention anyway, before he has seen more than a few weeks' service, for, as has been pointed out, they are favorite topics of conversation among newspaper workers. About the contention of overcrowding in the large cities the testimony is all on one side. The most optimistic editor who lives does not deny that it exists; every day his office is besieged by men in search of employment, and many of the applicants, he must confess, give evidence that they are capable workers, even if they are not wonders. And reporters, although in the majority, are not the only visitors; there is, among the place-hunters, a goodly number of editorial writers and city editors, and a fair sprinkling of men qualified to hold other high places.

Primarily the overcrowding is, of course, due to the ease with which newspaper work may be entered; it is frequently the first refuge of the young man who seeks to turn his general knowledge to account, and the last refuge or the tiding-over resort of the man who, forced from his accustomed orbit, has to look for a new means of gaining a living. Secondly, the overcrowding comes because there is a constant influx of workers from the small towns, and almost no movement in the other direction.

Experience weighs about as lightly in a newspaper office as it is possible for it to weigh anywhere. There is no requisite which years alone will bring, and in all except the highest places age is a hindrance rather than a help. The newspaper business is one wherein young men shine, and having failed to fight their way well toward the front, the middle-aged find small demand for their services. The fittest survive only until they are unfit, and sentiment is not allowed to interfere with the process of exclusion. Further, there are in newspaper offices no easy berths for men of long service; advancement brings not only heavier responsibilities but harder work and often longer hours as well.

That fame and reputation are hard to win in journalism is unquestionable. It is the almost universal rule that newspaper workers must write anonymously, and this is especially true of the editorial writers, for the editorials are supposed to stand for the paper and not for the men who work for it. Editors who handle news, aside from those who have proprietary interests in the newspapers on which they work, become known to the public little more than do the editorial writers. However much respected and esteemed they are by those with whom they come into close contact, their reputations do not travel far. If one doubts this he has only to undertake to name the editors-in-chief or the managing editors of the papers in any large city.

Would-be journalists, when they are told that fame is not often gained in newspaper offices, usually ask whether it can be denied that men have won glory as war correspondents. It cannot! But how many men have become famous through reporting battles on land or sea for daily newspapers? Can anyone name two

men who were war correspondents at the time of the Civil War? Coming nearer to the present, who were the regularly employed newspaper men that won renown reporting the battles of the Spanish-American War for the daily journals? Scores of correspondents traveled with the American forces, and most of them performed their duties in a manner that left nothing to be desired. Perhaps someone can name four of them. If so, is the person who can give the four names absolutely sure that the correspondents attained fame; certain that they were not merely exploited for the time by a paper which wanted to create the impression that its newsgatherers were of higher caliber than those of its competitors? Whatever the reply is, let the person answer two more questions: Where are the four correspondents now? What are they doing?

The newspaper worker through newspaper work alone cannot possibly acquire enough to permit him to start a newspaper of his own in a large city; saving until he had \$20,000, he would not be in so good a position to embark as would the salesman or the professional man who had only a twentieth part of this sum. No one would purchase a paper whose news service was poor, when the smallest coin in circulation procures one which records the news of the whole world, and without readers a paper could attract no advertisers, for these come only when the readers exist. In an established paper which was making money, the man who had only \$20,000 would get no chance to invest, and into one which was not making money, in view of the heavy expenses, he would be foolish to put his capital.

A newspaper office in a large city, aside from the pressrooms and business office, is one of the few places

where the attainment of success does not demand a corresponding increase in the equipment. When a newspaper starts in these days it must, if it is to live, have even for the first issue a full complement of workers, and thus it comes about that growth creates no new places to which capable men can be promoted. Nor does the attainment of success bring about an advancement of salaries. The duties of the editors and reporters are the same whether their paper has one hundred readers or one hundred thousand, and demanding full pay when a venture's future is uncertain, they have no reason to ask for more simply because they find it becoming a great money-maker.

About the attractiveness of the monetary rewards of daily journalism each man can decide for himself. The capital prizes are usually underrated by reporters and sub-editors; but they are not so large as many persons who are outside of newspaper offices are led to believe; nor are they so numerous. Most reporters and sub-editors are firmly convinced that no editor is receiving over \$15,000 a year; a good many of the outsiders believe that at least a half-dozen editors are receiving \$60,000 a year each, and that \$25,000 salaries are fairly plentiful. The truth lies between the two ideas. Not taking into account the amounts set aside for men who have pecuniary interests in the publications to which they devote their attention, the greatest yearly income received by a daily newspaper editor in the United States can be set down as about \$50,000. Only one prize of this size exists. The next highest amount, also received by only one man, approaches \$35,000. Two or three other workers get something like \$20,000 each, and there are about a half dozen more who get in the neighborhood of

\$15,000. Possibly ten others reach the \$10,000 mark. The total number of those who receive \$5,000 a year or over, men who are most competent to judge estimate at about three hundred. An experienced war correspondent who has a reputation receives about \$100 a week and his expenses paid while he is at the front.

Newspaper salaries are larger in New York than in any other city in the United States, with the natural result that from all over the country editors and reporters flock to New York in search of employment. Hundreds make the pilgrimage every year and thousands more are always contemplating it; in every other city and in nine-tenths of the villages of the country there are newspaper men who are saving money, or fully intend to save it, to make the journey.

Probably seven-eighths of the newspaper men who journey to New York from other places in search of employment fail in their quest; and to none does failure come harder than to those from the small country towns, for somehow or other, the conviction has become fixed in these places that men who have spent several years working on country dailies or weeklies are in high favor in the big cities, particularly New York, and that they need only announce themselves to be taken in with open arms. In reality, the country newspaper worker is not in great demand in New York or any other large city, and the man whose application for employment is backed up by nothing more than a statement that he has been trained on a weekly publication or a small town daily, stands almost no show of getting a situation on a paper where novices are not received. The applicants who are viewed with favor are those who come from papers in

the medium-sized cities, places big enough to keep three or four reporters for each paper busy, and yet not large enough to make necessary the department system.

Despite all this the number of men actively engaged in newspaper work in New York who were born and brought up elsewhere is far greater than is the number of those who are natives of the city; it occasionally happens that a paper does not have on its staff a single reporter, copy reader, or editor who is native-born. But this does not prove in itself that the small town and country-bred men are the more aggressive fighters. It is hard for the city man to get a start, for inexperienced men are not received everywhere, and again, for one reason or another, city men are not attracted by daily journalism quite as strongly as are some others. It must not be understood, though, that all the New York newspaper men who are natives of other places were experienced when they arrived in the city; many made their start in New York, having come to the city immediately after leaving college.

The inexperienced man who gets a place on the staff of a New York daily is usually set to work at a salary of \$15 a week. At the end of his first year the new reporter who has good reason to believe that he has come up to expectations, may look for an advance of \$5 a week. Those who do unusually well get another advance of the same size at the close of their second year's service; but the majority are compelled to work for three years before their salary is increased for the second time. The experienced reporter who comes from another city is usually started at \$20 or \$25 a week, and advanced as soon as he proves deserving. Workers who come to the city by

request, of course, make special arrangements regarding pay.

The incomes of morning newspaper men in New York, as elsewhere, average higher than do those of workers on the afternoon publications. Few experienced morning paper reporters receive less than \$25 a week, and \$35 is common; while the long service men who are paid at space rates run far over this amount. A good space man will average \$60 a week, and there are a few stars who have weekly guarantees of \$75. They receive this much as a minimum, and in particularly good weeks will make \$90 or \$100. The highest space rate is \$8 a column, and the lowest \$5; but occasionally double rates are allowed for beats or particularly well-written stories. Only the very best space men work under guarantees. The others are paid only for such of their stories as appear in print, or for the time they spend in seeking news; for working several hours on a story and getting nothing, or material for a bare paragraph, they are permitted to charge for their time at the rate of fifty cents an hour. For the time they spend in the office waiting for assignments they receive nothing. It is possible, though, as the minimum pay for an article bearing a heading is \$1, be it only five or six lines long, for a reporter to receive anywhere from \$10 to \$20 for stories that together would fill only a column. Every good space man depends upon the Sunday supplements to help him to keep up his average.

There are at present no space writers regularly employed on the New York evening papers. Salaries only are paid, and because of this many reporters look back with regret to the days when paid according to their output they received half as much again as they

now do. Employed on the evening papers there are plenty of good reporters whose salary is \$30 a week, and many capable of handling any story that comes their way who get only \$25. Forty dollars is considered generous pay. The few men who get \$45 or more are those who cannot easily be replaced, men who, having had the opportunity to make a specialty of financial, legal, political, or other reporting of like importance, can get news which would escape other reporters not accustomed to their work. Fifty dollars is about the limit for afternoon paper reporters.

Among the best paid workers are those who rewrite stories telephoned in by the reporters or delivered by the newsgathering concerns. Most of these men employed on the afternoon papers receive \$45 a week, while a few get as high as \$65. Reporters who do office writing for the morning papers usually make about \$45 a week, with an occasional man making \$60. Pay for department reporters averages less than that of general workers, not often passing the \$30 mark. Usual pay for copy readers on evening papers is \$35 a week, although in some offices the uniform salary is \$40. Morning paper copy readers almost always receive \$40, and the energetic ones increase this amount by \$10 or \$20 by contributing to their Sunday supplements.

In theory, at least, a copy reader is a grade higher than a reporter, but not all reporters are anxious to be made copy readers. Instead, a great many of the best newsgatherers take pains to create the impression in their offices that as copy readers they would cut sorry figures. Making as much or more money than copy readers, and having outdoor work with a good bit of freedom, they do not elect to tie themselves down

merely for the privilege of placing themselves in direct line for promotion. The reporter who has offered to him a place at the copy desk has reached the parting of the ways. On the side of the reporter the good points are outdoor life, frequent contact with men of affairs with the consequent chance to get into business or politics, and freedom from responsibility for other men's mistakes. On the side of the copy reader are exemption from the danger of defeat while seeking news, a little authority, fixed hours, and the prospect of promotion to an editorship. Frequently reporters are promoted over the heads of copy readers, but not unless they can read copy as well as gather news, and in addition possess desirable qualities or accomplishments which the available copy readers lack. It is a common saying among newspaper men that the best reporters often make the poorest editors, but this is only expressing in another way the evident truth that because a man is a good worker himself it does not follow necessarily that he can direct others. The man who does give up newsgathering for copy reading in a sense renews his allegiance to journalism, signifies that he expects to stand or fall by what he accomplishes in it, and that he has no exterior ambitions.

On morning papers in New York editors-in-chief and managing editors ordinarily receive from \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year. City editors' salaries range from \$4,000 to \$7,500, while telegraph editors receive from \$2,000 to \$3,000. Editorial writers average \$5,000, but there are a few men of long service and extraordinary ability who pass the \$10,000 mark. Night city editors earn about \$4,000 a year. On evening papers the editors-in-chief and managing editors get in the neighborhood of

\$7,500; city editors from \$3,000 to twice this amount, and telegraph editors from \$1,500 to \$2,500; while salaries of editorial writers range between \$2,500 and \$5,000. For a dramatic critic on either a morning or an evening paper \$3,000 is good pay, while art critics and book reviewers without reputations earn about \$2,000. Papers which make a specialty of financial news pay the editor who looks after its collection and preparation for publication, anywhere from \$2,500 to \$6,500 a year. An exchange editor's salary ranges from \$1,500 to \$2,500 a year, depending upon the financial condition and the importance of his paper, and in his class are the majority of the special department editors. The sporting editor, though, usually gets more than do other department heads. The pay of a Sunday editor is about \$3,000 a year, unless he is one of the two or three men who have charge of the supplements from beginning to end, and are not under the supervision of a managing editor, in which case he may get \$5,000. Illustrators and cartoonists are on the average better paid than are writers. A fairly good illustrator will, if he works for a salary, get \$40 a week, and a first-class man working on space will make almost twice this amount. A few of the leading cartoonists receive salaries which do not suffer much when compared with those paid the managing editors of their papers. The photographers who hunt news with cameras are, considering the obstacles they have to overcome and the risks they run, poorly compensated. Reporters treading on forbidden ground try to look anything else than newsgatherers; the photographers are expected to look just as innocent and go just as far despite their tell-tale apparatus. Again, reporters, for policy's sake, frequently view the per-

sons about whom they are collecting information from across the street, and even then do it unostentatiously. The photographers must throw discretion to the winds, and by their boldness defy the game. When, now and then, a victim turns, smashes a camera and threatens to chastise the man who operates it, the hunter, now turned hunted, is supposed to effect a compromise and somehow or other return to the office bearing in triumph the picture he set out to get. Thirty-five dollars a week is good pay for a photographer.

In Brooklyn, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco, reporters get from \$600 to \$2,500; copy readers from \$1,200 to \$2,000; editorial writers, from \$2,000 to \$5,000; and city editors, from \$2,000 to \$5,000. For managing editors and editors-in-chief, the maximum is about \$10,000. In other cities which have populations in excess of one hundred thousand, pay runs about as follows: editor-in-chief or managing editor, \$4,000; editorial writer, \$1,800 to \$2,000; city editor, \$1,500 to \$2,500; copy readers and reporters, \$600 to \$2,000.

In cities which have less than one hundred thousand inhabitants, and over twenty-five thousand, there is not even the roughly fixed standard of wages that exists in larger cities, and a newspaper man's salary depends at least as much on the ability of his paper to pay as it does on his own work. Commonly, the recruits come from the local high schools, each of which every year turns out several young men who, having no career mapped out, are glad to become reporters at \$5 a week. Not many newspaper workers in these small cities make \$1,500 a year; the one who receives \$2,000 is a rare exception; \$12 a week is fair pay for

a good reporter, and only the leaders get as much as \$18.

For the services of a woman in a newspaper office there is not much demand; and in the opinion of most men who are engaged in newspaper work, a woman is entirely out of place in the reporters' room. The men are not of this mind because they object to a woman competing with them or because they imagine that a woman has not as good a right as a man to earn a living, but rather because they are convinced that reporting is not woman's work. They do not like to see a woman tramping around day and night, rain or shine, and they do not like to think of the places she has to visit, and the unseemly errands she has to perform. To state the plain truth, a woman never gets a place in the general newsroom because she is a reporter, but only because she is a woman. Once employed, she is looked upon as a kind of strange bird which is to be detailed on strange assignments, and everything she writes is labeled directly or indirectly "By Our Woman Reporter." It is not enough for her to write a plain statement of fact at any time; always her stories must display their origin. The woman reporter whose name goes down on the city editor's schedule as do the names of the men—first in first out—does not exist.

To any woman who thinks that she wants to become a general newsgatherer, the following incident is respectfully submitted. A year or so ago, in a city which need not be named, there was brought to the notice of the police a murder which had connected with it all the fittings of a first-class mystery. A young man and a young woman late at night had gone to a hotel and procured a room; the next morning the man was

found dead in the room with a bullet-hole in his head, while the young woman was missing. For a few hours the police were baffled; then following the few clews provided they came to the conclusion that a certain woman was the murderer. But because their evidence was insufficient, they refrained from making an arrest. While they were marking time, the day for the young man's funeral came, and then it became known that the suspected woman, who was conducting herself as if she were unaware that suspicion was attached to her, was to follow the body to the grave. On the morning of this day, an editor summoned a woman reporter, and when she appeared said to her: "I believe that this woman is guilty, and I want you to get a confession." Then he delivered orders as a result of which the woman reporter dressed herself in deep black, went to the funeral, got into the carriage that carried the suspect, and posing as a mourner, rode with her to the cemetery. As it turned out nothing came of the ride, for the suspected woman kept silent, but it gave the men reporters who discovered the ruse something to talk about in private. They all wondered what the woman reporter talked about, and what she thought during the ride.

When it comes to special work there is room for women in newspaper offices, although the places are few. The novelty of the woman journalist has worn off, and even the largest papers now employ only two or three regularly. A woman can collect society news better than can a man, she can handle the fashions and the recipes better, she can compete on even terms with him as literary editor, and she alone can successfully conduct the woman's page or the woman's column. But it is not every woman who can do these things. It is

not enough that a woman need the money and that she be willing. She must have a fertile mind, she must be observant, and she must be able to write entertainingly. Her material, too, she must procure herself, and she must fill the space allotted to her without fail. To write a column of popular topics every day is an exceedingly hard thing to do, and it certainly must be doubly hard when the subjects must all be restricted to the feminine. In a newspaper office the woman who conducts a department or a page has the respect and good will of every one, and the space-paid reporters regard her with admiration and almost with envy. Possessing her skill, they tell themselves they would become rich. The salaries paid to woman journalists are not as large as they are generally supposed to be; worse than this, they are smaller than they ought to be. The women who get \$40 a week are as rare as comets, and the ones who get \$30 are few. Twenty to twenty-five dollars is good pay in the largest cities, and outside of the half-dozen leading cities, \$18 is about the limit.

## CHAPTER XVII

### WITH THE PRINTERS

WHILE it is a common custom for city newspaper men, while talking about the making of a paper, to give the impression that a story is as good as in print the moment it leaves the editorial rooms, or that it has at least reached the stage where it can cause no more worry, it is a great mistake to assume that the mechanical department is nothing more than a machine which, as long as it is supplied with copy, can do nothing else than turn out printed papers. What the newspaper men, who close their talks on newspaper making by saying, "And from here the stories go to the printers," actually mean, whether they realize it or not, is that the mechanical workers are a uniformly efficient body of men who can be depended upon to carry out the tasks assigned to them in a highly praiseworthy manner, and with the greatest possible speed. A very large proportion of the true wonder-workings of modern daily journalism are performed in the mechanical department.

There are four main sub-divisions in this, the last station through which a newspaper passes on its way to the readers, and every newspaper worker should take enough interest in his calling to learn something about each one. The business manager and the higher editors invariably do take the trouble to acquire a fair working knowledge of them, and because of this they

are always able to ascertain where the fault lies when the paper is slow in coming from the presses, without having to listen to bewildering explanations. The city editor and the copy readers have to learn something about at least one phase of the mechanical work to avoid setting impossible tasks for the printers, and the reporters have to acquire the same knowledge if they are to guard against having occasional stories torn apart and reconstructed for physical reasons alone.

First in the mechanical department come the compositors, who reproduce in type the articles prepared by the editors and reporters; next are the photo-engravers, who prepare the plates from which pictures are printed; then come the stereotypers, who from the pages of type make duplicate stereotype plates; and last are the pressmen, who operate and keep in repair the exceedingly complicated printing machines. Since the photo-engravers are employed only where pictures are printed, and are therefore not indispensable, it is just as well in undertaking to explain the actual making of a newspaper to take up their work first and dispose of it before passing on to that performed by the men commonly included in the general term "printers."

There are two kinds of pictures printed—line drawings made from pen and ink sketches, and half-tones, which are reproductions of photographs—and preparing plates for either, the photo-engraver proceeds in the same manner. The picture which is to be printed is at the start tacked on a board and, under the glare of an electric arc light, photographed. Then the film-bearing plate is taken from the camera and developed in the usual way, after which the film, after being

toughened by applications of chemicals, is stripped from the glass, reversed, and deposited on another piece of glass, heavy and clear. This second piece of glass is now placed in a printing-frame with its film side tightly pressed against a polished plate of zinc, the face of which has been sensitized. An exposure of a few minutes to electric light prints the picture on the zinc, which is, after having been taken from the frame, rolled with ink, and then subjected to a bath which removes most of the coating, leaving only the reproduction of the picture in sticky lines. Then the plate, after drying, is covered with a chemical known as dragon's blood, which, adhering only to the sticky lines, forms a covering for them when it has been heated and allowed to cool. To complete the process, it is only necessary to immerse the plate in a bath of nitric acid, which etches or bites the zinc away where it is exposed.

Coming from the acid, a photo-engraving can be sent to the make-up men as soon as it can be mounted on a block and made "type high." But a line drawing plate requires a little more attention. Before it is ready to be placed on a block it must be gone over by the routers, who cut off rough edges and, with rapidly driven burrs, grind away the zinc where it has been eaten by the acid until the drawing stands out in bold relief. If everything moves smoothly, a half-tone plate is made from a finished photograph or drawing, and mounted in from thirty to thirty-five minutes.

The compositors, once commonly known as type-setters and now usually called machine operators, are generally quartered in the top floor of the newspaper building; the reasons for this are that they can work

best when they have good light, and that the machines they operate throw off noxious fumes which make good ventilation necessary. Until comparatively recent years the compositors, standing in front of cases divided into compartments, picked up the lead types one at a time and, laying them in receptacles called sticks, spelled out the words indicated in the copy provided. But now in the large establishments little real typesetting, if advertisements and headings are excepted, is done, the handworkers having made way for machines, each of which operated by a skilled man will, in a given time, do four or five times as much work as an average old-style compositor. In general use at the present time there are three kinds of these machines. One, now rarely seen, sets types somewhat as did the hand compositors, magazines or reservoirs, however, taking the place of cases; another molds types from molten metal; while the third, the one most widely employed, also using molten metal, turns out reading matter in solid lines, hence the name Linotype. All the machines have keyboards and are operated much as are typewriters. Where the machines which set actual types are installed, there is a second piece of apparatus employed to distribute the types after they have been used. The machine which makes types is in two sections; one section, which carries the keyboard, perforates a strip of paper, while the second, absorbing the paper and guided by the perforations, completes the work. In the Linotype the brass molds, or matrices, after permitting the molding of a line, are automatically returned to the reservoirs. In both the machines which do molding, the product after use goes back to the melting pot. The equipment of a large newspaper includes forty or fifty

composing machines, and in the composing room about one hundred men, including perhaps twenty-five "ad" hands—men who set advertisements—are frequently employed. All are under the care of a foreman who is held responsible for the character of the work performed, and who does any disciplining found necessary.

Perhaps as good a way as any to explain how a paper is printed is to follow a story or two from the time they are written until they appear in the paper. For the purpose of illustration, it may be supposed that the day is just starting in the office of an evening publication which is not in the habit of issuing day-break editions, and that two reporters are at work, one writing about a collision, the other about a fire. After editing the opening pages of the two stories, and here it must be pointed out once more that reporters usually send their copy to the city editor a page or two at a time, the copy reader summons an office boy who, placing the pages in a miniature elevator or pneumatic tube, starts them off for the composing room. Reaching there, they stop, as does all material that is to be printed, at the desk of the copy cutter, an individual who, although he is rarely heard of outside of the room where he works, performs a task that calls for an active brain, nimble fingers, and a particularly cool head.

The main purpose of the copy cutter's employment is to save time, and this calls for the explanation that fast as a composing machine is, it is at times not fast enough. A single machine to turn out a column of type requires about an hour, no matter how skillful the operator, and the editors could never afford to wait this long for a column story which the entire city,

was anxious to read. The copy cutter gets around the difficulty by cutting each long story that reaches the composing room into pieces and distributing them, thus permitting a number of men to work on the story at one time. It is not a hard thing to distribute the pieces of manuscript, anyone could do this; but it is extremely difficult to plan, while effecting the distribution so that the pieces of each story, after they are turned into type, can be assembled quickly and accurately. The size of the takes that go to the compositors depends always upon the nearness of the time for issuing the next edition. If there is no cause for hurry, a man commonly gets enough material to make four or five inches of type. But if, at the last moment, the editors contribute an important story which is marked "Rush," the copy cutter divides more closely and gives each man only enough to make three or four lines. The copy cutter, as a rule, pastes the pages that come to him together and divides so as to make each take include a paragraph, which relieves him of the necessity of making a lot of explanatory markings; and it is because of this that matter intended for publication must not be written on both sides of the paper.

Of course, the copy cutter adheres to a system. He could not hope to remember where all the pieces of a story went, nor could he hope to accomplish much by running around the office at intervals, taking a look at each operator's product and issuing verbal instructions. There are a number of different systems employed, but the one in most common use is based on a chart ruled into two-inch lettered squares. The top square of each column is lettered A, the next B, and so on. It may here be supposed, to return to the description undertaken, that the copy cutter, having ruled and

lettered his chart on a big sheet of paper, has just fastened it on the flat top of his desk, when a warning bell rings and the two stories already spoken of stop at his elbow. In a moment, he has the roll of copy unfolded, and is inspecting the pages. Quickly he ascertains through the catch lines that there are two stories, and glances at the highest numbered pages tell him that neither one is complete. First he takes the three pages of the "Collide" story, which are written in lead pencil with the lines far apart, and pastes them together in order. Then, with a snip of his shears, he divides the sheet thus made into two pieces. After placing on the first piece at the top, with a heavy crayon pencil, the marking 1A, and on the second in like manner 2A, he lays them on the edge of his desk, whence they are hurried to two operators, turns to his chart and in the square heading the first column writes over the A he finds there the word "Collide," and after the letter the figure 2 followed by a dash, the latter to indicate that there is "more to come." This done, the copy cutter attacks the second story, four typewritten pages. With the aid of his paste-brush he joins them, and a moment later, under his shears, the sheet falls into six pieces, which are soon numbered as were the others, only now the letter B is used. Placing these takes where he did the others, the copy cutter a second time turns to his chart, and in the second square of the first column over the B writes "Fire," and after the letter makes the marking 6—.

At this juncture, it may be supposed, a fresh lot of copy arrives from the editorial rooms, among it the five pages that bring the "Collide" story to an end. These, pasted and divided, become 3A, 4A, and 5A,

and with them started toward the machines the copy cutter in the A square already marked writes 5+, thus making the square carry the complete marking Collide A 2—5+. The plus mark signifies that the story is "closed" and the marking entire says that the "Collide" story reached the composing room in two installments; that it was divided among five operators; and that it is complete. If now, two more short pages which end the "Fire" report reach him, the copy cutter has only to join them, mark the sheet 7B and add 7+ to his B square to get this story, too, pretty well off his hands. All that remains for him to do is to pick up the two slips of paper, write on one A5 and on the other B7, and send them to the men who receive the sections of type from the machines, as a notification that two stories are coming, one in five sections, the other in seven.

In view of the foregoing explanation, it might appear as if the copy cutter did not have such a hard time after all, but to prove that he must remain alert and cool-headed, it is hardly necessary to say anything more than that in practice long before he is through with A and B, he is struggling with C, D, E, F, and G, and maybe with even more stories, all reaching him piecemeal. The copy cutter begins to use the second column of his chart after the first is filled, but by this time the early stories are out of the way, so there is no danger of confusion.

The bankmen, who assemble the sections of type received from the machines, depend for guidance on the slips sent to them by the copy cutter; they never read the type, and if misleading instructions are given them, trouble is sure to follow. Their workbench is the bank, a long waist-high counter, the top of

which slopes toward them as they stand in front of it. Along the top, from end to end, six or seven inches apart, run narrow strips of wood about a half inch high, and resting against these strips and by them prevented from sliding off to the floor, are numerous brass trays, three and a half to four inches wide, and of all lengths up to a column. In these trays, called galleys, which are flat-bottomed and inclosed on both sides and one end by an edge a trifle over a half inch high, are received the sections of type as they are carried from the composing machines. To follow the work of a bankman, let it be supposed that he has just received from the copy cutter the slip marked 5A. Picking up a medium-sized galley, for the figure 5 tells him that the story is not a long one, he goes over it carefully with a damp sponge to remove all dirt or dust which, getting under the base of the type, might throw some of it "off its feet," and then returns it to the bank, resting it lengthwise against one of the wooden strips. With a piece of chalk he now writes boldly near the galley's open end, on its bottom, 5A, and then up near the closed end, marks the figure 1. Three or four inches from this figure 1 he writes the figure 2, and follows this up with 3, 4, and 5, at intervals. He is now ready to receive "A Matter," and the quicker it comes the better is he satisfied.

It rarely happens that the type sections reach the bank in the order in which the pieces of copy were given out, and it may reasonably be supposed that in this instance 2A is the first to be delivered. Carrying the section in a short galley, one of the men who relieve the operators of their output walks up to the bank and looks around until he finds the galley marked A. Then he deftly lifts the section and deposits

it, with its beginning toward the closed end of the galley, and one side resting against the galley's lower edge exactly on the figure 2. Three A, which supposedly comes next, is placed on the figure 3, and before long the other three sections are set in place. The bankman who, all this time, has been keeping an eye on the galley, the moment he sees all the numbers covered, begins to get the story ready for the proof press. First, he slides the first section, that which carries the heading, up against the galley's end; next, he moves section 2 up as far as it will go, and after this the other sections. The article is now solid from end to end, but between the sections are strips of lead bearing the numbers of the operators who made them. Each operator has a number, and while at work is known as "Slug 7" or whatever his number may be, instead of by his name. Invariably, when a section of type is deposited on the bank, it is headed by the slug of the man who made it, and these slugs are not removed until after proofs have been taken and the article has been corrected. If the operators are doing piece work the slugs enable them to prove title to their output, and in any event tell the foreman how much and what class of work each man is doing.

As soon as the bankman has joined the sections of an article, he lays a strip of metal along the free side of the type, and inserting wedges behind it, locks the article firmly in place; after this he turns the galley over to a boy who carries it to the proof press, where four proofs are taken, one for the managing editor, one for the foreman of the composing room, one for the proofreaders, and one for the operators. The proof press in its simplest form is an iron bed a

foot wide and three or four times as long, over which a heavy felt-covered roller can be trundled. Laying a galley on the press bed, the proofmaker, after inking the type, adjusts a slip of paper and makes an impression by passing the roller over it.

With the proofs when they are sent to the proof-room, at the head of which is a foreman who appor-tions the work, goes the copy which directed the compo-sitor. Always the proofreaders work in pairs, a proofreader proper who receives the printed slip, and a copy holder who receives the copy. Both ready, the copy holder begins to read aloud while the proof-reader, who keeps his eyes on the printed slip and reads to himself, keeps pace with him; marking errors, as they proceed, on the proof's margin. It is highly necessary that the copy holder be employed, for without him it would be impossible to catch omissions and added words, where the change did not destroy sense. The copy holders read very rapidly, but they must enunciate distinctly, even though they read for eight hours a day with only momentary rests. The correcting of mistakes is all done by a special squad of printers. A second proof is taken after a galley has been corrected, and the galley goes to the make-up men the moment the proofreader pronounces it all right.

To the make-up men falls the task of taking the completed and corrected articles from the galleys and arranging them in the pages. The arrangement, how-ever, is not left to their judgment, as one of the editors, as has been explained, directs their move-ments, at least so far as the important stories are con-cerned. While a page is in the hands of the make-up men the chase, as the steel frame in which the stories

are deposited is called, rests flat upon a smooth, iron-topped table which, as it is supported on wheels, can be shifted from one position to another without much effort. The type or lines of type are moved about in sections like blocks of wood, a liberal application of water giving them a fair degree of firmness. But woe betide the man who grows careless with types. Grasped too loosely and lifted, a section will fall apart like ashes, while squeezed too tightly, it will bulge and fly in every direction. In either event the mixture that results is "pi" and the section must be reset. The product of the linotype is not easily " pied," but it has the disadvantage that to correct a single letter an entire line must be reset. In making up a page the longer articles are placed well toward the tops of the columns, while paragraphs and brief stories are used to justify or "make even" at the bottoms. Both editors and copy readers keep the make-up men in mind while at work, and send many short stories, items that are in themselves of little worth, to the printers with the thought that they can be used as "justifiers." Should the making-up at any time be retarded through a lack of these space fillers, the city editor is sure to be reminded that their presence in profusion is not only desirable but necessary.

Having got a page filled to his satisfaction, and the two stories, "Collide" and "Fire," may now be considered as having places where they will not be overlooked, the editor who directs the work gives the word to "lock up," and the page, after the columns of type have through the employment of side sticks, screws, and wedges, been securely fixed in place, and the whole surface has been gone over with a wooden block and a mallet to "plane" any irregularities, is

started for the stereotypers. And now for a few moments the page of type which, once locked up, becomes a form, is an exceedingly precious article; should any accident befall it the managing editor has good cause to tear his hair, for no paper can be issued until the damage has been repaired. And every long-established paper has in its history horrifying incidents dealing with "busted" forms. Sometimes the disaster comes when faulty locking up, resulting in uneven pressure, allows a good-sized section of type to drop when the form is lifted; sometimes it comes when a careless workman, bumping the form against some projecting corner, knocks in it a hole through which he could put his fist. But occasionally, even worse disasters are recorded. A stumble or a loose grasp may land the form on the floor a hopeless jumble of type, column rules, leads and dashes; or the breaking of an elevator cable may distribute these same things all over the basement five or ten floors down.

It is the province of the stereotypers to reproduce the type pages in curved metal plates which can be attached in multiple to the cylinders of the big web presses. A type form in itself would be of no use in a modern pressroom; it could not be attached to any of the presses, and even were this obstacle in some way overcome, only one press could be run at a time, which would extend the period required to run off an edition running into the hundred thousands to several days. Nor would this see an end to the difficulty, for long before the edition was nearly complete, the type faces would be worn off until they produced only blurs. The stereotypers, taking a page of type, reproduce from it, in an exceedingly few minutes, plates sufficient to equip perhaps a half-dozen compound

presses and allow them all to run at one time, and should it be found that a plate is showing signs of wear, they quickly offer another to take its place.

Receiving a page, the stereotypers, who never have to be summoned but are always ready and waiting, slide it, face up, upon the flat bed of a strongly built press. Over the face of the types they adjust a damp sheet composed of a number of sheets of tissue paper pasted together, and after covering this with a blanket, start the machinery which moves the bed bearing the page under a heavy revolving steel drum. Adjusted so that it is scarcely more than the thickness of a sheet of cardboard above the face of the page, the roller forces the soft tissue sheet down so that it receives a clear impression of the types. With the paper sheet adhering, the page is now slid into another press, the upper part of which is immediately screwed down as tightly as two men, exerting all their strength on the big wheel at the top, can screw it, and here under pressure and subjected to great heat, for the machine is surrounded by pipes filled with steam, the form is left for three or four minutes. At the end of this time the press is opened and the paper sheet, now become a matrice, is removed. And now for the first time the metal page, so far as the edition under way is concerned, loses its value; if no more editions are to be printed it can develop the worst case of "pi" ever seen without causing the least confusion. But if other editions are to come the form is hurried back to the composing room and again attacked by the make-up men.

The paper matrice in the twinkling of an eye, after it comes off the type page, is bent into a curve, thrust into a revolving oven which is heated by gas

flames, and subjected to a minute's baking. Coming from the oven, it is gone over by the stereotypers, who, using pieces of some composition material, build up low places, and after having been trimmed to size with a pair of shears, is carried to the "Autoplate," one of the newest and greatest wonders of the modern newspaper establishment. Before this machine came into use, and it is not found in every city now, the stereotypers, wishing to reproduce a page, adjusted the matrice in a molding box which, after being closed, was filled with molten metal. The box was opened after the lapse of a minute or two, or as soon as the metal had solidified, and the plate was taken out, dipped into a tank of water to cool it, and turned over to the trimmers, who planed off the edges and made it ready for the presses. This operation had to be gone through as many times as there were plates needed. The "Autoplate" performs all this work automatically. The matrice is put in place, the machine is started, and immediately the plates, cool enough to permit handling, begin to emerge, all ready to go to the pressroom, at the rate of four a minute, which speed can be kept up indefinitely, or certainly until the largest pressroom in the country is supplied. Each "Autoplate" machine costs about \$25,000, and the value assigned to seconds when they come at the time for going to press, in a modern newspaper establishment, cannot be better illustrated than by saying that several New York papers have two of these machines set up in their stereotyping departments. Where every facility is afforded, the stereotypers regularly deliver the first plate thirteen or fourteen minutes after a page of type is given into their hands, and follow this with duplicates at fifteen second intervals. To a per-

son unfamiliar with newspaper publishing, the question may here not unnaturally arise, "Why are so many plates of each page required?" and to answer this question it is necessary to pass to a description of the pressroom.

Since the ultimate aim is to get all the printed papers into the hands of the readers quickly, it is the time required to print the entire edition which counts. Because of this the owner whose paper enjoys a large circulation has to install a number of presses and attain an early "finish," by operating several of them at one time. And, to be strictly accurate, it is not right to call one of the highly complicated printing machines "a press," for each one of them is not one press, but a number of presses built together. Thus there are double presses, quadruples, double quadruples, sextuples, octuples, double sextuples, and several other kinds. Dressed to print an 8-page paper, a quadruple press carries 32 plates, four of each page, while an octuple, printing the same size paper, carries eight plates of each page, or 64 in all. In the light of this explanation, it can be seen why duplicate plates are required, and it is only necessary to add that a quadruple press cannot be started until four plates for each page are in place, nor an octuple until eight plates for each page are on the cylinders, to show how desirable it is that the plates follow each other from the stereotyping room in close order.

Here it should be pointed out that the managing editor never, if he can avoid it, delivers a great number of pages to the stereotypers at one time. Long before the scheduled moment for going to press arrives, he makes up and sends along the editorial page and the ones which contain advertisements only, and after this

at intervals delivers the inside news pages. Each page is attacked by the stereotypers the moment it reaches them, and the plates they produce are without delay screwed to the cylinders of the presses. Thus it comes about that, with the time for going to press close at hand, four compound presses may be equipped to turn out papers except that each one lacks four plates of one page. Usually it is the title page of the paper which is longest wanting, the editor holding it to insure good positions for the late news. Listening to the make-up men planing the last page the stereotypers stand on pins and needles, feet braced and arms outstretched. When at last the page becomes theirs, it goes through the various processes as if by clockwork until the first plate is produced. The plate weighs 52 pounds, but the stereotypers swing it to the pressmen as if it were made of nothing heavier than cardboard. In a few seconds the pressmen have the plate in its place on one of the presses, and are back, like Oliver Twist, asking for more. The second and third plates in place, the fourth quickly follows. Then the press dressers spring from the maze of wheels with a shout of "All clear!" the foreman gives the signal, the wheels begin to turn, and out come the papers printed, folded, cut, and pasted at the rate, say, of 36,000 an hour. With one press at work the pressmen turn to the second one, and soon its machinery, too, is moving, and the papers are appearing at the rate of 72,000 an hour. The third press in motion brings the output up to 108,000, and the fourth in full swing lifts it to 144,000 an hour.

The blank paper four pages wide is fed into each press from several rolls or webs, each of which at the start weighs about a half ton, and the printed papers

come out on platforms, neatly piled, with every fiftieth or hundredth one projecting a little beyond the others to save the "fly boys," who carry off the papers, the necessity of counting. To ascertain the total number of papers printed at any time, the foreman has only to inspect the counting machine with which each press is equipped. In the pressroom of the Brooklyn *Eagle*, the presses are fitted with the flying paste contrivance only recently introduced, which even does away with the necessity of stopping to renew the blank paper supply. The rolls, instead of resting on the press itself, are suspended, three in a set, on a triangular frame at the press's end. At the start the press is fed from the top roll. Finding this roll getting low the head pressman slows the press to something like quarter speed and touches an electric button which causes the triangular frame to revolve slowly and bring the second roll, which begins to turn on its spindle up, inside the first and under the stream of paper leading from it. The free end of this second roll has been liberally covered with paste and finally, pressing against the flying web, it attaches itself to it and is carried along through the press. The pressman then cuts the first web, and after putting the press up to top speed again, sets about fitting a new roll in the place of the one exhausted.

With all large presses it is possible to print papers of any number of pages up to the maximum, which is usually 32 pages, and most of them permit of many variations. Thus, in a double-quadruple press there are two distinct sets of printing machinery which can be operated separately or together. One end of the press can print in color and the other in black; if desired, a cover of one grade of paper can be printed

and folded to include the ordinary output; and the pages can also be printed half size, and issued bound by wire staples in magazine form. Ink and oil are frequently supplied under air pressure from reservoirs some distance from the presses, and the rolls of paper are delivered either on small railways or traveling cranes. Every press of a kind that would now be installed in New York costs a good-sized fortune, hardly less than \$45,000, and when, as occasionally happens, one of them is started after a careless workman has left a wrench or a steel bar in its interior, the damage that results in a half second may call for an expenditure of more money than the average mechanic earns in half a year. Usually, however, when anything goes wrong with one of the big printing machines the damage is confined to one unit, and the removal of a few cogs and spindles allows the remainder of the press to be operated as before the accident.

In theory, the limitations of a printing press are unbounded, and in practice, they are determined only by the walls of the pressroom and by the amount of money available. The unit press is one having a single cylinder which revolves 200 times a minute. The cylinder which carries eight plates prints eight pages at every revolution, and therefore, in sixty minutes, or one hour, the output is 12,000 eight pages. A double press prints either 24,000 8-page or 12,000 16-page papers, while a quadruple, which is four single presses built together, prints 48,000 8-page or 24,000 16-page papers. A double-quadruple or an octuple, in essence eight presses, prints 96,000 8-page or 48,000 16-page papers, while a double-octuple has double this capacity. As has been said, there is no limit to the joining of units, but the largest presses

in operation are double-octuples. Seven of these machines were not long ago made in New York and delivered to a London newspaper. The largest press in New York is a double-sextuple, whose output is 96,000 12-page or 72,000 16-page papers an hour. All these figures are maximums. In actual running, on account of time consumed in replacing rolls of paper and breaks in the webs, the pressroom foreman is well satisfied with an output of seventy-five per cent. of the maximum. The pressroom installation of the New York *World* embraces 12 compound presses which are equal to 70 single presses, and to fit them all 560 plates, weighing a total of 29,120 pounds, are required. Usually, to print the morning edition, nine presses are operated, each delivering 16,000 papers an hour, or a total of 144,000. With every press in this plant running, the hourly output of 8-page papers would come close to 800,000 copies. Day in and day out the first paper is here printed within fifteen or sixteen minutes of the time the last page is delivered to the stereotypers, and with one press moving the others are started at intervals of not over two minutes.

In a few evening paper offices where the spirit of rivalry is particularly rampant and where money is plentiful, the time required to get out a paper after the receipt of important news is greatly reduced through the employment of a device known as the "fudge." Where the fudge is included, in the mechanical department it is the practice of the editors to have the title page of the paper the moment it has been stereotyped for a regular edition, returned to the composing room and remade, this time with an open space, usually two columns wide and four or five inches high, left somewhere in it. From the page is now made an

emergency plate which is hurried to the pressroom and deposited close to one of the presses. Probably forty-nine times out of fifty the emergency plate remains there untouched until it is picked up to go back to the melting pot, but for all this it is never forgotten, for when it is needed at all it is needed very badly.

The fudge itself includes a small printing cylinder which is attached to one of the big presses, and a small curved chase which can be locked on the cylinder by a few turns of the wrist. To illustrate the operation of the fudge it may be supposed that, a few minutes after the printing of a regular edition has been begun, a piece of news which it is highly desirable should be made public is received in the editorial rooms. Immediately one of the editors writes a brief bulletin and delivers it to a fast compositor while another editor telephones to the pressroom that an "extra" is in order. The compositor does his best on his short take, and in less time than is required to tell it the bulletin is in type and on its way to the pressroom securely locked in a fudge chase. In the meantime the pressmen have stopped one of their presses, removed the regular title page plate and in its place fitted the "emergency." The press could now be run as before, but the papers would come out with a blank space on each front page. Receiving the fudge chase the pressmen carry it to the small cylinder and fasten it on it in such a manner that the type bulletin will "key" exactly into the blank space left on the web after it has received the impression of the emergency plate, and a moment later the press is again running. The bulletin is printed directly from the type and in any color, as the small cylinder has an independent ink supply. If the New York City Hall were to fall down, both the *Evening*

*Journal* and the *Evening World* would, in all probability, have "fudge extras" on the street within four minutes, and not unlikely one of them would cut this time by half a minute.

When they are expecting a piece of news the men who direct the fudge work even more quickly, for the intelligence is received in the pressroom over a special telegraph wire and is turned into type on a composing machine set up right beside one of the presses. Scores of important baseball and football games are always received in the pressroom and printed within a minute and a half of the moment the figures are announced by the telegraph operator. But when the possible results are known beforehand, as on the occasion of a horse race, the men who handle the quick printing apparatus perform not in minutes but in seconds. If there are four horses entered, some editor early in the day has turned into type three independent lines for each one, thus, Firefly wins, Firefly was second, Firefly was third; and shortly before the time set for the starting of the race these lines are arranged face up so that they can be easily read on a table close beside the fudge cylinder of a press bearing an emergency plate. The fudge chase which bears a type heading like "Suburban Result," having room left in it for only three lines of type is also placed on the table, and in front of it a quick-fingered man stations himself. At his elbow sits the telegraph operator, who is in direct communication with a man stationed at the finish line at the race track. When the race starts the operator announces, "They're off," and then, listening to his instrument, describes the progress of the contest. As the horses near the end of their journey there is a pause; then the result is announced.

"Rob Roy wins," calls out the operator; "Firefly was second; Delano third." The lines of type bearing these announcements are slipped into the spaces left for them; the chase is locked and adjusted on its cylinder, a gong sounds, and before the race horses have been more than turned toward the paddock the press is moving. The feat has more than once been accomplished in fifteen seconds.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE MONEY-MAKING DEPARTMENT

AND now that it has been explained how the reporters and correspondents gather the news, how the editors prepare it for publication, how the editorial writers perform their duties, and how the printers actually make the paper, it is high time to say something about that part of the newspaper which furnishes the money, and particularly about the purse holder, the business manager. In an actual newspaper office and not in a mere description of one, the business manager would never be found bringing up the tail end of the procession. Outside of the editorial rooms, from cellar to roof, his word is law. And inside, while he does not, as many persons would have it supposed, dictate the paper's policy nor spend half his time suppressing news, his word is law, subject to the court of last resort. His decisions hold good, in brief, unless they conflict with the paper's constitution.

Rarely has the business manager served an apprenticeship in the editorial department. Often when he has not risen by degrees in a newspaper's business office he comes from a banking house where he has learned how accounts are kept, how collections are made, and how notes and other commercial paper are handled; and sometimes he comes from a mercantile or manufacturing establishment, where he has been taught these things, and in addition has been trained

to direct other men, to buy and sell to advantage, and to conduct a business economically. Whatever his training he must be quick to detect a schemer, for continually he is pursued by men who, while possessing no money, have brilliant plans which they say need only to be exploited to bring in floods of wealth. On their prospects, they would like to make arrangements for the advertising which is to put them on the road to affluence. Not often do these schemers succeed in painting word pictures radiant enough to dazzle the business manager, for constantly hunted, he becomes shy and hard to bag.

Few persons not having intimate knowledge of a newspaper have any idea of the great amount of money required to start one, or to keep one running which is already established. The mechanical equipment and delivery service alone may demand an investment of several hundred thousand dollars—there is one New York paper whose mechanical equipment cost \$1,000,000—supplies are in constant demand, and the salary list is a long and heavy one. For a new paper the salary list of the editorial department is especially formidable, as editors and reporters who have employment with well established publications are always reluctant to change to a venture that at best is in for a rough voyage, and can be attracted only by high pay. A good many of the newspapers that are started soon become memories, and fewer than are generally supposed are paying their own way. The sum of \$3,000,000 would hardly suffice at the present time to equip a first-class newspaper establishment in New York City, issue a morning and an evening edition paper, build up a circulation of 75,000 for each, and place the establishment on a money-

making basis. Run on the lines of those already established and possessing no extraordinary features to recommend them to the public, the two papers might continue to lose money for twenty years. When one learns that there are in New York business managers who are compelled to reckon with an average weekly expense account of nearly \$50,000, he can understand the possibility of heavy losses. And it might be added, in contrast, that there are in New York newspapers which could not be bought for \$10,000,000.

An honest newspaper which does not sell news to other publications has only two sources of income. One source is the public, which buys the paper for its news, its editorials, or maybe its pictures. From this the return is comparatively small; but upon the numerical strength of a paper's readers and their financial standing as a class, depends the size of the income which flows from the other source—the advertisers. It might be supposed, at first thought, that the paper which had the largest circulation would be most prized by advertisers. But such is not always the case; the class of readers is a large factor in determining the worth of a paper as an advertising medium. There are some publications which even make a virtue of the fact that they do not have large circulations, contenting themselves with asserting that their readers are more likely to buy than are the readers of some other journals. Papers which make this claim generally sell for two or three cents; and advertisers, keeping it in mind that persons who pay these prices for newspapers can probably pay prices above the average for other things which they may desire, are willing to buy space in their columns at rates which would not be warranted were the number of readers alone considered.

The ideal newspaper from the standpoint of the business manager would be one selling for three or five cents which had a circulation larger than any of its competitors. But there are few publications which come close to answering this description. Almost always the paper which has the best class of readers, ability to buy here marking the classification, has far from the largest circulation, while, in the great centers of population, the paper which has the most readers rarely numbers among them many individuals who are wealthy. Where, however, there is one advertiser who asks about the class, there is always another who inquires about the number of a paper's readers. The merchant who had cheap groceries to dispose of would never think of advertising in a paper the bulk of whose readers were bankers, brokers, or merchants, and the paper he would most highly prize would of a certainty be ignored by the man who had for sale high-priced automobiles.

Of readers alone a newspaper may get too many for its own good, for a large circulation unaccompanied by advertising receipts in proportion is a costly luxury. It is not in selling its issue to readers that a newspaper makes a profit, but in selling advertising space. The individual copies of a newspaper are sold at less than cost, if the advertising receipts are not counted, so in one sense the more copies a paper disposes of the more money it loses. Generally a paper which finds its circulation growing so that new equipment is necessary, must advance its rates for advertising space, or operate at less profit. An increase in the amount of advertising may serve instead of higher rates, but not always, for as advertisements cannot be allowed to crowd out news, an increase in their bulk

may demand a larger paper and consequently more paper and ink, and maybe more presses and a larger delivery equipment.

While an honest newspaper which does not sell news has only two sources of income, it does not necessarily follow that all newspapers are dependent upon what comes to them through these channels alone; far from it. A widely-read newspaper has money offered to it on all sides, and if it takes all within reach it sinks pretty low. Some papers, seeking to justify the course they pursue, draw distinctions that are too fine for the average man to comprehend, and among these are the ones that in return for an extra compensation print disguised advertisements in their news columns. For example, a paper may print a long article in its news columns, saying that oil has been discovered on property owned by Blink, Blank & Co., "the well-known brokers." The public, reading this, thinks how lucky Blink, Blank & Co. are, and John Smith, Henry Brown, and others hasten to the offices of the brokers to invest their money in these same oil lands, which is just what Blink, Blank & Co. had planned when they paid the newspaper to make the announcement. Or again, this same newspaper may declare with much enthusiasm that James Black, after years of experimenting, has perfected an automatic machine which is going to revolutionize the making of shoes, and when Mr. Black forms a stock company to manufacture and operate the machines, the persons who read of the wonderful invention pay him well for the possibly worthless stock. In New York City there are no papers which will print advertisements disguised as news; when an advertisement is in a form that does not readily disclose its identity it is labeled at the end by the abbre-

viation "adv." or some symbol such as a star or a dagger.

But many newspapers which would absolutely refuse to print disguised advertisements do, without hesitation, print advertisements which decency should taboo. Also they fill whole pages with prospectuses of concerns which promise to make wealthy all who patronize them, when, as everyone who has any connection with the papers knows, the men who make the great promises are swindlers who prey on ignorant or unusually credulous persons. A few years ago, when one of these "get rich quick concerns," as they are called, went to the wall, it was made public that its promoters had succeeded in getting into their clutches more than \$2,000,000, while the creditors numbered over twenty thousand. This concern had advertised in scores of papers in all parts of the country.

A large part of whatever temptation there is comes to the business managers, and with opportunities for adding to their papers' incomes on so many sides, the wonder is that they do not more frequently allow themselves to be convinced by the plausible arguments of those seeking their favor.

One of the first tasks of a business manager, his paper having a home and a mechanical equipment, is to engage an advertising manager and a manager for the circulation department. After finding these men he can proceed to organize his clerical force, comprising a cashier, bookkeepers, solicitors, clerks to receive, measure, and record advertisements; and general office clerks, including those who are to sell papers either over the business office counter or direct from the pressrooms. With the editorial rooms, though, and these include the quarters of the reporters, he rarely

concerns himself. He is required to furnish the money to pay the men employed there, and because of this has the right to protest against any needless extravagance, but he usually disposes of the matter, and at the same time shifts part of his burden, by going to the editor-in-chief and the managing editor at intervals, and telling them that until further notice they may have a certain amount of money every month to run their end of the paper.

As the business manager's aim is to make the paper remunerative, he gives the greater part of his attention to the procuring of advertising and to the distribution of the printed papers among the dealers who put them into the hands of the readers. In a few establishments he personally directs the men who go about soliciting advertising, telling them whom to see and how to present and explain the advantages of the paper, but commonly the advertising manager gives the specific instructions. In any event, the business manager fixes the advertising rates, that is, sets the price at which space shall be sold, and conducts negotiations with the leading advertisers, among whom are the proprietors of the large dry goods houses and department stores. He also closes contracts with the agencies through which advertisements of patent medicines, cigars and cigarettes, beers and whiskies, and other widely advertised articles are placed by the makers. These agencies receive a commission from the paper on all money which they turn over to it, and they make it their business to learn as much about a paper's circulation and the class of readers it has as is possible, so that they can determine whether the prices asked for space are equitable.

It is worth remarking here that a business manager does not simply say that space is worth so much an inch. He considers the advertisers' wants and position as much as his own, and makes them pay in proportion as they may reasonably expect to benefit. How the classification is determined is sometimes hard to see, as when a banker is required to pay more than a broker for his announcements, but the business manager works it all out to his own satisfaction, and is prepared to explain when a question is raised. There is one New York paper which will, for a servant desiring a situation, print a three-line advertisement for fifteen cents. But from a householder who wishes to engage a servant, it will for an advertisement of the same size, demand twice this sum. If the mistress suffers an accident in the street, and later advertises for witnesses, the three lines will cost her ninety cents, and if tired of living alone she advertises for a husband, she will for the three-line advertisement have to pay three dollars, or twenty times as much as the servant who wishes employment pays to make her desire known.

Both advertising patrons and readers are pursued assiduously in large cities, and the larger the city and the richer the paper—for where money is plenty only successful solicitors are employed—the more energetic the pursuit. If a merchant places an advertisement in one publication, representatives of its competitors are never long in appearing to ask for a share of his business, and each caller can present reasons why the paper he represents should be recognized. Generally each paper is content to have its own good points set forth without any reflection being made on its contemporaries, but occasionally the solicitors direct the advertisers' eyes to weak points in the arguments of one

another and this may be followed by rebates, commissions, free insertions, and cut rates appearing as weapons in a fierce warfare. Of course, all the papers suffer while the fight is on, for with the amount of advertising remaining about the same, the only result is a smaller gross return, and decreased receipts for each publication.

Greatly desired by every paper, but extremely hard to capture, is a fine showing of the kinds of advertising that come under the heading "Classified," all the small announcements that fall in with "Help Wanted," "Situations Wanted," "Lost," and "To Let." These advertisements are in demand, because in addition to paying well, they increase circulation, and enable the paper to get close to its readers; and they are hard to get because they follow the crowd and go only where others of their kind are found. They act like ducks, and as in duck hunting, decoys are sometimes employed to attract them; but never has this kind of hunting proved very profitable to the paper trying it. Generally, the paper which has no classified advertisements can pursue them with solicitors, advertise for them, cut rates, give premiums, and even offer to print them for nothing, without making any progress worth mentioning. And the paper which has a fine array can usually do away with solicitors entirely, expend no more than a nominal sum in self-advertising, charge high rates, and even increase them, and still have the prized advertisements keep rolling in, so long as it maintains its standard as a newspaper and does not, through some mistake, make itself widely unpopular. The situation is this: when a man desires employment, he carries his announcement to the paper which prints the most ad-

vertisements of this kind, because he knows that it is to this paper that the persons who wish to employ help naturally turn; and reversing the situation, the man who is in the market for help, of course, patronizes the paper which he knows is inspected by place hunters.

In the larger cities the daily publications do not deliver papers direct to readers, the force required to deliver the output of one big establishment alone would make a good-sized army; but nevertheless, the circulation manager is forever devising means of getting new customers. Often he employs solicitors to go around and offer books of various kinds to persons who will agree to allow the newsdealer nearest them to deliver the paper to them for a year, and again he holds out other prizes. But commonly, after submitting to the business manager suggestions whose adoption he thinks would add to the paper's attractiveness, he strives to attain his end by having the paper widely and promptly circulated. He never forgets that a paper, no matter how excellent it be, cannot win readers to whom it is never offered, and he does not allow himself to entertain the mistaken idea that a paper that is slow to reach the newsstands will even hold its own; that with other papers spread before them readers will be content to stand around and wait for the arrival of the paper he distributes. An occasional man may do this frequently, and the average man may do it occasionally, but neither will be content to make it a steady practice. Unable to procure their favorite paper at the time they know it should be on hand, both sooner or later turn to other papers, it may be for good, for frequently a man finds in a paper with which he has not

been familiar more features that appeal to him than are contained in the one to which he is accustomed; and again, reading a certain paper for a few days, if for no other reason than that it is the only one procurable, a man may come to select it through habit. The persons who walk up to a newsstand, lay down their money, and pick up the first paper upon which their eyes chance to light are exceedingly few.

The notice printed at the head of the editorial page of many of the largest papers to the effect that the publisher will consider it a favor if any person who is unable to procure the paper at his newsdealer's will make the fact known, means all that it implies. It means that the circulation manager will do his best to remedy the defect, and when he does his best in a case of this kind he generally accomplishes what he has set out to do. He remembers the man who made the complaint, and writes him a letter of thanks, but he does not set to work as if only a single customer were to be satisfied. He knows that where one man takes the trouble to write there are a score who will remain silent, and further, he tells himself that there are in the same locality, in all probability, a half hundred more persons who now giving no thought to the paper might become its patrons if it were placed within their reach. At least, he will change a delivery route to get his paper into the neglected territory, and he may go further and make out a new route.

If any newspaper publisher imagines it is not worth while hunting readers as individuals, he should pay a visit to Brooklyn and investigate the methods pursued by the oldest paper of that city, a publication that is a success in every department, and a great money-maker. Somehow, whenever a new family moves into

Brooklyn, this paper, the *Eagle*, learns of it; just how is an office secret. Within a week the woman who heads the household receives a typewritten letter,—not a carbon copy or a fac-simile,—signed by the paper, saying it is glad the family has moved to Brooklyn; that it hopes their experience in the city will be pleasant and satisfactory; that it will be found that the Brooklynites are neighborly, and that “if you will take an active interest in our social and political life, you and your family will soon have a desirable list of new acquaintances and friends.” Not a word is said about the paper. Within the next week the family receives free of cost a copy of the paper’s almanac, which sells for fifty cents, and an invitation to visit the paper’s home, one of the show places of the city. Then a young woman representing the publication calls on the newcomers; never before 9.30 o’clock in the morning or later than 5 o’clock in the afternoon, and gives them any information that she can; tells them about car lines, schools, churches, stores, and places of amusement, and if they ask any questions which she is unable to answer, promises to make inquiries. The visitor makes no more direct mention of the paper than did the letter, but leaving the house she stops at the nearest newsdealer’s and orders that a copy be delivered to the family for one month, the bill to go to the paper’s business office. At the end of the month the young woman makes another call, and this time the family is asked how they have liked the paper, and whether they have decided to take it regularly; and no matter what the reply, the visitor leaves as she came, smiling. No family is neglected, not even foreigners who cannot speak English. The promotion work costs about one dollar “per prospect,” yet the publisher gets

returns that satisfy him that his campaign is a winning one.

When it comes to getting the paper circulated promptly, the business manager and the circulation manager are always endeavoring to improve on existing conditions. Hearing of a new piece of machinery that will save a few seconds in the pressrooms, they hasten to inspect it, and, the treasury allowing, make arrangements for its installation; the opening of a new street railroad or the putting on of a new train by a railroad company sets them to poring over timetables and maps; and the introduction before the aldermen of an ordinance providing for the visiting of unusually severe penalties upon fast drivers, induces them to rush upstairs to see the editors, down town to see lawyers, and across town to see politicians. The circulation department keeps those who control it extremely busy, and it keeps them worried, too, for it is forever breaking down in spots. The horses that draw the wagons get sick or go lame; the wagons go to pieces either through hard use, or suddenly in collisions; the drivers are arrested for running over someone or coming near it, sometimes missing trains as a result; and the newsboys become disgruntled because they cannot get eleven instead of ten papers for five cents.

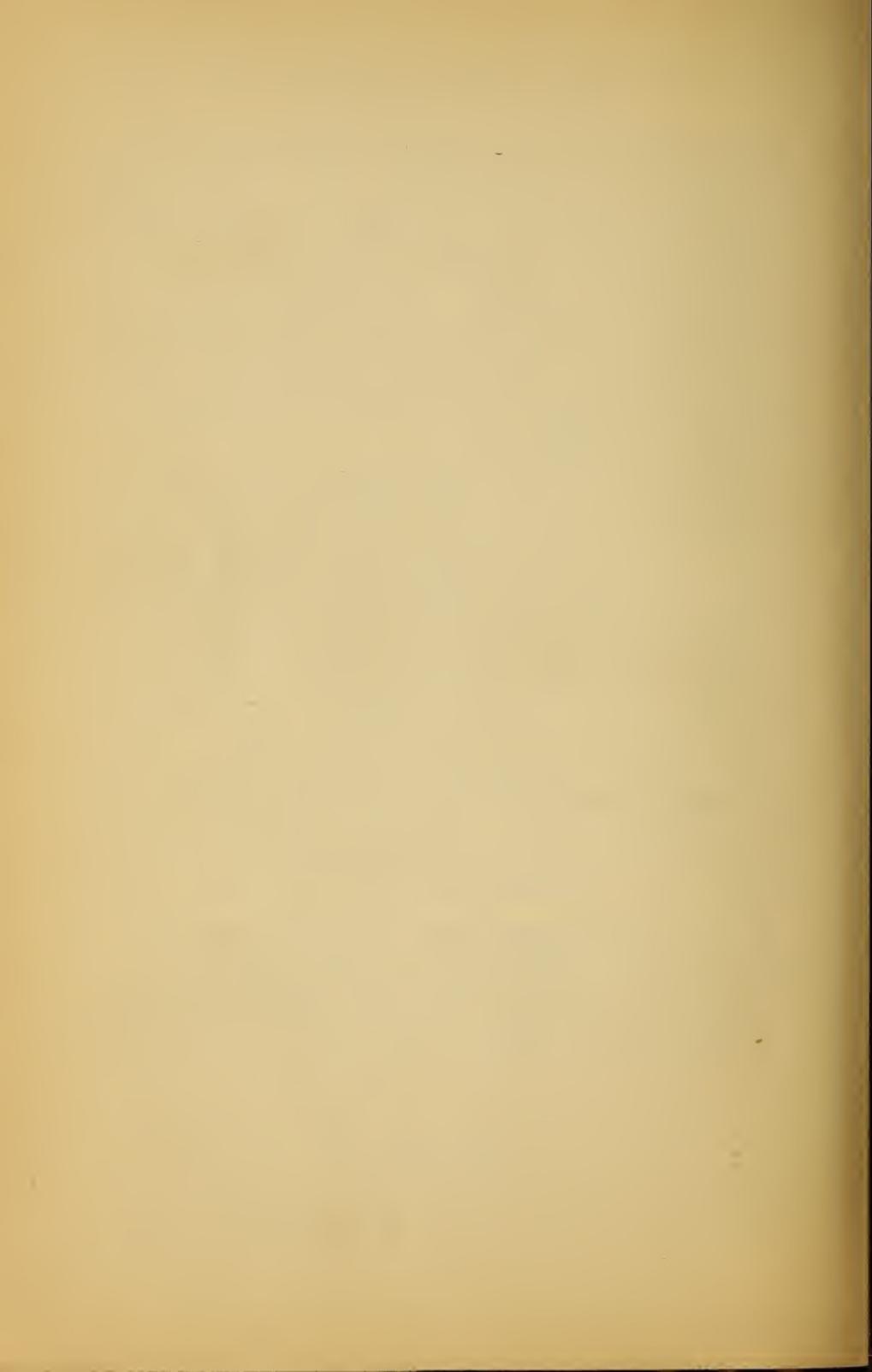
Issues intended for the city the circulation men rush from the pressrooms into wagons that are driven as fast as the police will allow, which commonly means as fast as the horses can go, to distributing points where they are met by the newsdealers and newsboys. In New York both the elevated and subway railways are also employed; large bundles of papers are piled on the platforms of the cars at the stations nearest the

offices and distributed along the entire roads to waiting retailers. At certain stations, too, thousands of papers are thrown off and carried to wagons waiting in the street, which carry them either direct to the retailers or to distributing points. The New York papers were among the earliest users of automobiles, but the machines they tried were found to be too light for the work, and were discarded. Evening papers dispose of thousands of their issues at the pressroom doors and especial efforts are made to supply the newsboys quickly when the papers that give the closing quotations of the stock market are coming from the presses. All through the financial district these quotations are in demand, and the first paper to reach the scene makes the most sales, as at this time there is little waiting for favorite publications. Covering the district thoroughly and having a clear field for fifteen minutes, a paper could probably distribute twenty thousand copies. Papers intended for out-of-town readers are forwarded by both mail and express. For the morning issues there are special trains of express cars which stop only at large towns; at small stations bundles of papers are tossed off without the train slackening speed.

Of necessity the business manager, while he would like to devote himself exclusively to the acquisition of money, must give part of his time to the spending of it. Not every week is there a call for machinery, but supplies are in demand constantly, foremost among them paper and ink. The bill for paper is one of the largest items of expense—there are papers which use over \$500,000 worth in a year—and this bill must be met promptly, for the companies which manufacture paper are comparatively few, and none of them is, for

want of an outlet for its product, forced to deal with customers who are slow to pay. Another large item of expense with which the business manager must reckon is the bill for telegraph tolls, which when submitted is turned over to the managing editor for inspection and indorsement. Of course, it is to the advantage of the managing editor to keep this bill as low as possible, as the amount it requires must be deducted from the sum set aside for the maintenance of the editorial department.

But no single item of expense in a newspaper establishment overshadows that which stands for labor. The editors and reporters, as well as the business office force, are generally well paid—the business manager's own salary commonly coming second to only that of the highest paid editor, and not a bad second at that—and no matter what they receive the compositors and pressmen, and all the other workers in the mechanical department, get wages that must be classed as high. When editors and reporters are engaged there is bargaining sometimes, but there is none where mechanical workers are concerned. Having set the price at which they hold their services, these men stick to it at all times. They get their price or they do not work. The result is that the compositors, stereotypers, and pressmen in many establishments fare as well as do all except the highest-paid reporters, while the foremen get salaries that compare favorably with those received by the subordinate editors.



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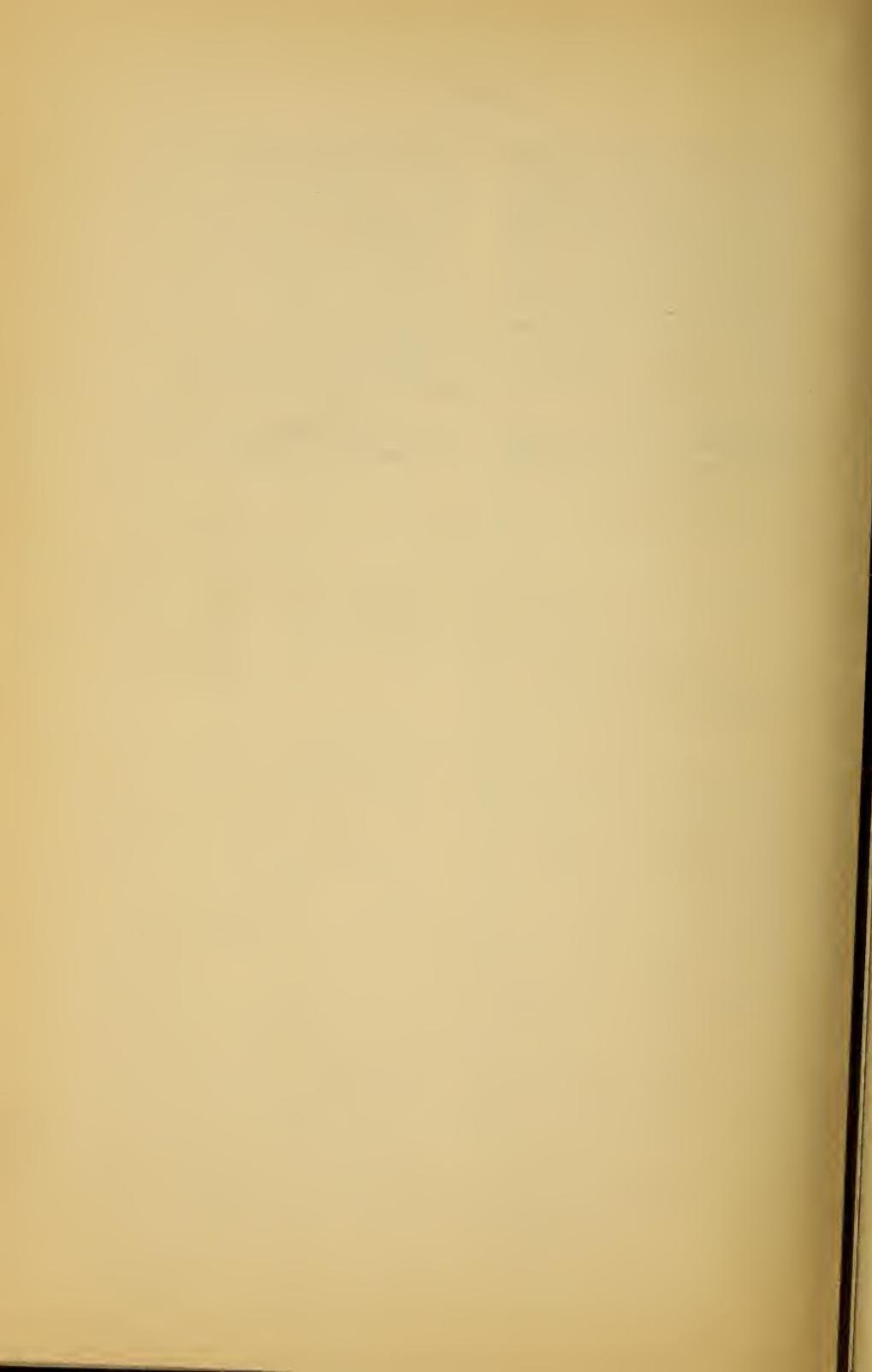
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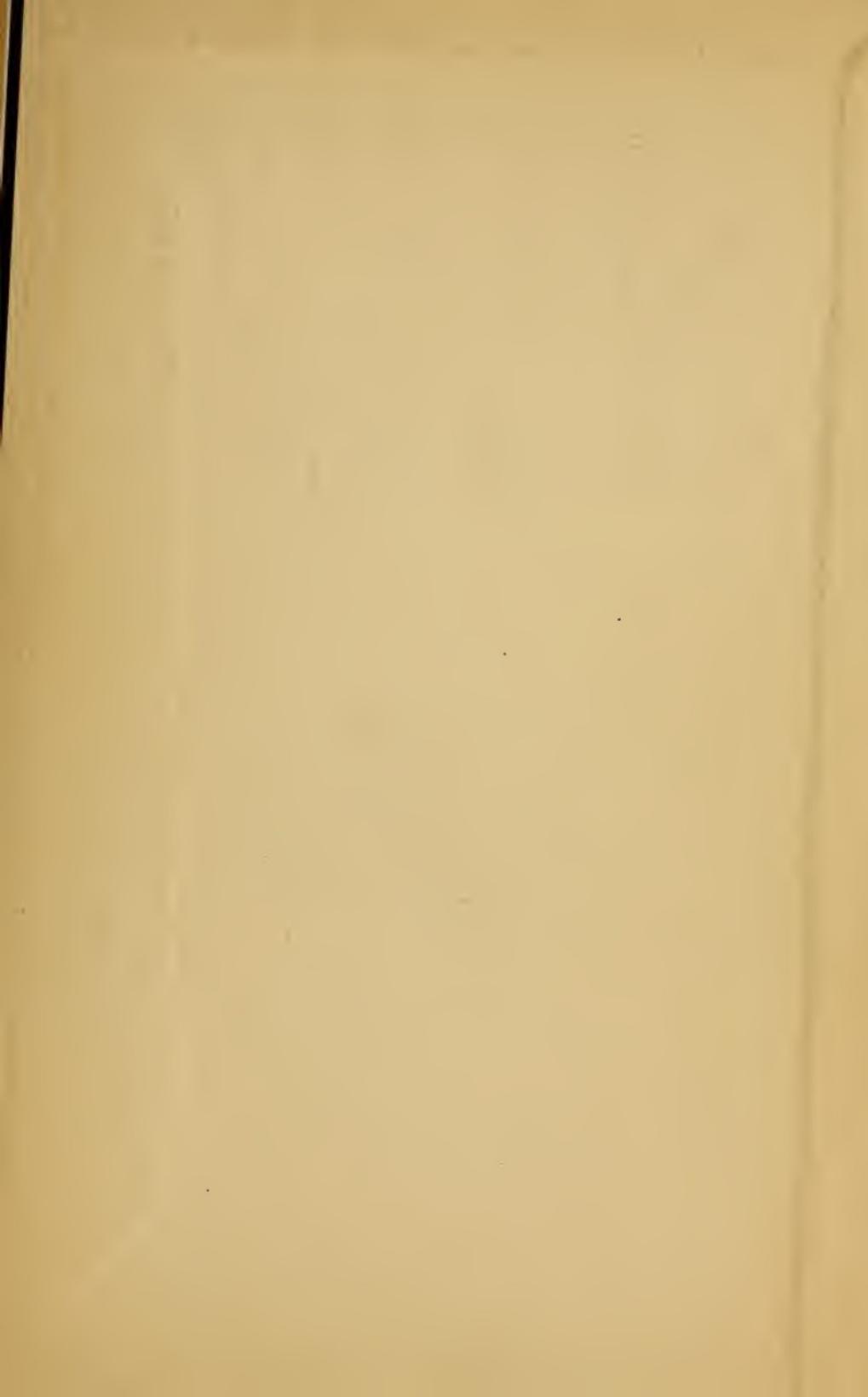
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